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European Parliament

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

2014/C 19 E/01 Written questions by Members of the European Parliament and their answers given by a European Union institution 1

(See notice to reader)

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Notice to reader

This publication contains written questions by Members of the European Parliament and their answers given by a European Union institution.

For each question and answer, the original language version is presented before a possible translation.

In some cases, it is possible that the answer is given in a language other than the question. This depends on the working language of the committee requested to provide the answer.

These questions and answers are published in accordance with Rules 117 and 118 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament.

All questions and answers can be accessed via the website of the European Parliament (Europarl) under the heading 'Parliamentary questions':

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR POLITICAL GROUPS

PPE	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
S&D	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
ALDE	Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Verts/ALE	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists Group
GUE/NGL	Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left
EFD	Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group
NI	Non-attached Members

EN

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

Written questions by Members of the European Parliament and their answers given by a European Union institution

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(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003577/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Novo dispositivo para análise de sangue

Considerando que:

— uma equipa de cientistas desenvolveu um dispositivo que, implantado sob a pele e com apenas 14 milímetros de comprimento, consegue testar o sangue sem precisar de romper a pele;

— de acordo com os cientistas, este aparelho pode manter-se durante meses sob a pele, facilitando a monitorização de doenças crónicas;

como avalia a Comissão esta descoberta?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

Os dispositivos médicos inovadores podem trazer aos doentes benefícios assinaláveis. A Comissão está, por isso, empenhada em manter um quadro regulamentar que garanta plenamente a segurança dos dispositivos médicos na União Europeia e incentive a inovação neste domínio, bem como em apoiar a inovação e a investigação científicas.

Todavia, não cabe à Comissão avaliar ou comentar um dispositivo médico específico como o mencionado pelo Senhor Deputado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003577/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: New blood testing device

A team of scientists has developed a device just 14 millimetres long which, when implanted under the skin, can analyse the blood without the need to break the skin.

According to the scientists, this device can be kept beneath the skin for months, making it possible to monitor chronic diseases.

What is the Commission's view of this discovery?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Innovative medical devices can bring major benefits to the patients. The Commission is therefore committed to maintain a regulatory framework, which fully ensures the safety of medical devices in the European Union and stimulates innovation in this area, and to support scientific innovation and research.

However, it is not the Commission's role to assess or comment on a particular medical device such as the one referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003578/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Novo sistema legal para o erro médico

Considerando o seguinte:

— Um grupo de investigadores da Universidade de Coimbra pretende apresentar um sistema legal menos agressivo, mais eficaz e mais favorável à redução do erro médico;

— O coordenador do estudo intitulado «Para um quadro legal de responsabilidade médica menos agressivo, mais eficaz e mais favorável à redução do erro médico» explica que «o ambiente litigioso entre médicos, advogados e doentes lesados é muito agressivo», e que por isso é necessário «delinear um sistema mais equilibrado e mais tranquilo entre as partes» que «simultaneamente seja menos agressivo para os médicos» e «mais célere para os doentes, nomeadamente ao nível das indemnizações»;

— Os países escandinavos, a Áustria e a França são já bons exemplos de sistemas deste tipo, que se têm revelado «muito mais eficazes para a reparação dos danos»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que comentários lhe merecem estes dados?

2. De que modo poderá a Comissão, a nível europeu, contribuir para uma diminuição dos níveis de desconfiança muitas vezes verificados e melhorar assim a relação médico/doente?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia não tem conhecimento do estudo referido, nem a Comissão procedeu a uma análise comparativa dos sistemas jurídicos dos Estados-Membros no domínio dos erros médicos.

A Comissão gostaria de chamar a atenção do Senhor Deputado para a Recomendação do Conselho relativa à segurança dos doentes, incluindo a prevenção e o controlo de infeções associadas aos cuidados de saúde ([1]), que recomenda que os Estados-Membros divulguem informação aos pacientes sobre os procedimentos de reclamação e as vias de recurso disponíveis. A Comissão apresentou um relatório sobre o progresso realizado relativo à execução dessa recomendação em novembro de 2012 ([2]).

Além disso, a Diretiva 2011/24/UE relativa ao exercício dos direitos dos doentes em matéria de cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços ([3]) que deverá ser transposta até 25 de outubro de 2013, estipula que os Estados-Membros devem garantir procedimentos de reclamação transparentes para os pacientes que procurem obter reparação nos termos da legislação do Estado-Membro de tratamento, em caso de danos resultantes da prestação de cuidados de saúde. Esta diretiva exige ainda que os Estados Membros estabeleçam pontos de contacto nacionais que informem os pacientes sobre os procedimentos de reclamação e mecanismos de obtenção de reparação.

No que diz respeito às preocupações do Senhor Deputado relativamente à relação médico/paciente, este é um assunto da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. Como estipulado no Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, a competência da União limita-se a apoiar, coordenar e a completar as ações dos Estados-Membros na proteção e melhoria da saúde humana, no pleno respeito da responsabilidade de cada Estado-Membro pela organização e prestação de serviços de saúde e cuidados médicos.

([1]) 2009-C 151/01.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/policy/index_pt.htm
([3]) JO L 88 de 4.4.2011, p. 45-65.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003578/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: New legal system for medical error

A group of researchers at the University of Coimbra is proposing a legal system that is less aggressive, more effective and more conducive to reducing medical error.

According to the coordinator of the study, entitled *Para um quadro legal de responsabilidade médica menos agressivo, mais eficaz e mais favorável à redução do erro médico* [Towards a legal framework for medical responsibility that is less aggressive, more effective and more conducive to reducing medical error], the litigious atmosphere between doctors, lawyers and aggrieved patients is very aggressive, meaning that there is a need to establish a more balanced and calmer system between the parties which is simultaneously less aggressive towards doctors and faster for patients as regards compensation.

The Scandinavian countries, Austria and France provide good examples of this type of system, which has proved to be much more effective in terms of damage reparation.

1. What does the Commission have to say about this?

2. How could the Commission, at EU level, help reduce the mistrust that often exists between doctor and patient and thereby improve the doctor/patient relationship?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The European Commission is not aware of the study referred to, nor has the Commission carried out a comparative analysis of Member States' legal systems to address medical errors.

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the Council Recommendation on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections ([1]), which recommends that Member States disseminate information to patients on complaints procedures and available remedies and redress. The Commission presented a report on progress made towards implementing this recommendation in November 2012 ([2]).

In addition, Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([3]) due to be transposed by 25 October 2013, stipulates that Member States must ensure transparent complaints procedures for patients to seek remedies in accordance with the legislation of the Member State of treatment, if they suffer harm arising from the healthcare they receive. This directive further requires Member States to establish national contact points which inform patients about complaints procedures and mechanism for seeking remedies.

As regards addressing directly the Honourable Member's concerns on the doctor-patient relationship, this is a matter that falls under the responsibility of the Member States. As stipulated in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the competence of the Union is limited to supporting, coordinating or supplementing actions of the Member States to protect and improve human health, in full respect of their responsibility for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care.

([1]) 2009-C 151/01.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/policy/index_en.htm
([3]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45-65.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003579/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Produção de eletricidade com vides do Douro

Considerando o seguinte:

— Um investigador português está a desenvolver um projeto — Da_Vide — que visa utilizar as vides. As vides são resíduos resultantes da limpeza das videiras após as vindimas que até agora sempre foram desperdiçados;

— Este novo projeto pretende produzir eletricidade diretamente a partir das vides do Douro e esta nova tecnologia poderá ser usada no desenvolvimento de pilhas ou baterias biodegradáveis;

— No âmbito do projeto Da_Vide já foi também criado o «combustível sólido inteligente» que queima com diferentes intensidades e a «supermadeira», um material cuja matéria-base é igual às madeiras naturais, mas que pode obter uma resistência mecânica muito superior em todas as direções;

Do ponto de vista das políticas ambientais da UE, como avalia a Comissão o potencial desta investigação?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

A investigação e o desenvolvimento tendo em vista o aproveitamento dos resíduos agrícolas como matéria-prima para a produção de bioenergia sustentável têm constituído sempre um elemento importante do Programa-Quadro.

A utilização da biomassa como matéria-prima para a produção de bioenergia é regulamentada pela Diretiva «Energias Renováveis» (2009/28/CE) ([1]), que estabelece os critérios de sustentabilidade aplicáveis aos biocombustíveis. Os requisitos de sustentabilidade aplicáveis à utilização de fontes de biomassa sólida e gasosa nos setores da eletricidade, aquecimento e arrefecimento são apresentados num relatório da Comissão publicado em 2010 ([2]), com a recomendação aos Estados-Membros para que apliquem os requisitos da Diretiva «Energias Renováveis».

Está em curso a investigação no domínio da produção de vetores bioenergéticos, que são intermediários sólidos, líquidos e gasosos com uma elevada densidade energética, produzidos a partir de uma biomassa rica em carbono, húmida e/ou seca, incluindo os resíduos agrícolas. Por exemplo, a torrefação é utilizada para produzir peletes torradas e a pirólise para produzir bioóleo, que podem ambos ser utilizados para a produção de calor e eletricidade.

Alguns destes projetos de investigação da UE orientam-se especificamente para a silvicultura de curta rotação e a utilização dos resíduos provenientes de culturas permanentes, como a vinha. Este ano foi lançado o projeto Europruning ([3]), que poderá ter especial interesse para o projeto Da_Vide.

Por último, este tipo de investigação está em plena sintonia com a política da UE no domínio do ambiente, da agricultura e da energia. No entanto, o potencial comercial de vinhas hipocarbónicas em ciclo fechado depende de a investigação ser capaz de assegurar uma oferta suficiente de biomassa de alta qualidade com uma tecnologia de rendimento de conversão elevado.

([1]) JO L 140 de 5.6.2009.
([2]) COM(2010) 11 de 25.2.2010.
([3]) Projeto EUROPRUNING do 7.° PQ: http://infres.eu/en/related-projects/europruning/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003579/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Electricity generation using Douro vine branches

A Portuguese researcher is developing a project, called Da_Vide, with the aim of making use of vine branches, which are waste products that had always been discarded until now, resulting from vine pruning after the grape harvest.

This new project aims to generate electricity directly from Douro vine branches and this new technology could be used to develop biodegradable batteries.

The Da_Vide project has also included the creation of 'smart solid fuel', which burns at differing intensities, and 'supertimber', which consists of the same raw material as natural timbers but can be much stronger in all directions.

From the point of view of EU environmental policy, does the Commission think that this research has potential?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Research and development into agricultural waste as a feedstock for sustainable bioenergy production has always been an important element of the framework Programme.

The use of biomass feedstock for bioenergy production is regulated by the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) ([1]), which sets the sustainability criteria for biofuels. The sustainability requirements for the use of solid and gaseous non-biofuel biomass sources in electricity, heating and cooling are reported in a Commission report published in 2010 ([2]), with the recommendation for Member States to use the Renewable Energy Directive requirements.

Research is ongoing in the area of the production of bioenergy carriers, which are solid, liquid and gaseous intermediaries with elevated energy density, from wet and/or dry carbon-rich biomass including agricultural residues. For example, torrefaction is used to produce torrefied pellets and pyrolysis is used to produce bio-oil; both can be used in heat and power generation.

A number of these EU research projects specifically look at short rotation forestry and the use of residues from permanent crops such as vines. One project called EUROPRUNING ([3]) was launched this year and could be of particular relevance to the Da_Vide project.

Finally, this type of research is fully in line with EU environmental agricultural and energy policy. However the commercial potential of developing closed cycle, low carbon vineyards depends upon research delivering a sufficient supply of high quality biomass with high conversion efficiency technology.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([2]) COM(2010) 11, 25.2.2010.
([3]) EUROPRUNING FP7 Project: http://infres.eu/en/related-projects/europruning/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003580/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Testes genéticos

Considerando o seguinte:

— Atualmente, são disponibilizados aos cidadãos em geral, e principalmente através da Internet, uma série de testes genéticos que oferecem a possibilidade de saber se se sofre de uma série de doenças, com base na análise das características genéticas individuais.

— Estes testes genéticos podem ter uma finalidade de diagnóstico ou serem apenas preditivos; segundo o Infarmed, «levantam questões éticas, uma vez que têm de ser interpretados», ou seja, a «prescrição e comunicação dos resultados obtidos através destes testes genéticos têm que ser feitas pelo médico»;

— Os testes genéticos preditivos não se encontram abrangidos pela definição de DIV (diagnóstico *in vitro*);

1. Como avalia a Comissão esta situação?

2. De que modo poderá a Comissão, a nível europeu, controlar a difusão e acesso livre a este tipo de testes?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão concorda plenamente com o facto de a questão dos testes genéticos, especialmente os que são tornados diretamente acessíveis ao público, ser muito sensível e importante.

Nos termos da legislação em vigor, os testes genéticos com «fins médicos» são abrangidos pelo âmbito de aplicação da Diretiva 98/79/CE relativa aos dispositivos médicos de diagnóstico *in vitro* ([1]). Em 26 de setembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma Proposta de Regulamento relativa aos dispositivos médicos para diagnóstico *in vitro* ([2]), que irá substituir a Diretiva 98/79/CE. A referida proposta clarifica o âmbito de aplicação da legislação, indicando explicitamente que as suas disposições englobam os dispositivos que permitem obter informações relativas à predisposição para uma condição médica ou uma doença. Reforça também substancialmente muitos aspetos ligados a esses testes. Classifica-os numa categoria de alto risco, reforça os procedimentos de avaliação da conformidade a aplicar pelo fabricante antes de colocar esses testes no mercado, introduz instruções de utilização e requisitos de rotulagem mais pormenorizados e reforça os requisitos em matéria de provas clínicas.

Além disso, os testes oferecidos através de serviços da sociedade da informação ([3]) a uma pessoa singular ou coletiva estabelecida na União devem cumprir o disposto no futuro regulamento, o mais tardar, no momento da sua colocação no mercado. Ademais, os dispositivos que não são colocados no mercado, mas são utilizados no contexto de uma atividade comercial para a prestação de um serviço terapêutico ou de diagnóstico oferecido através de serviços da sociedade da informação, ou de outros meios de comunicação, a uma pessoa singular ou coletiva estabelecida na União Europeia terão de cumprir igualmente o futuro regulamento.

A proposta da Comissão não prevê restrições no que respeita ao acesso do público aos testes genéticos, questão que está, no entanto, a ser objeto de debate no contexto do processo legislativo.

([1]) JO L 331 de 7.12.1998, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2012) 541 final.
([3]) Conforme definido no artigo 1.°, n.° 2, da Diretiva 98/34/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003580/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Genetic testing

A range of genetic tests, which analyse individual genetic characteristics, are currently available to the general public, mainly over the Internet, enabling them to find out whether they have any of a number of diseases.

These tests can be used for diagnosis or merely for predictive purposes. According to the Portuguese medicines agency, Infarmed, the tests raise ethical issues, since they need to be interpreted. In other words, a doctor has to prescribe these genetic tests and communicate their results.

Predictive genetic tests are not covered by the definition of IVD (*in vitro* diagnostics).

1. What is the Commission's view of this situation?

2. How can the Commission control, at EU level, the widespread availability of this kind of testing and unrestricted access to it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission fully agrees that the issue of genetic tests, especially those made directly available to the public, is very sensitive and important.

Under existing legislation, genetic tests pursuing 'a medical purpose' fall within the scope of Directive 98/79/EC on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices ([1]). On 26 September 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices ([2]) which will replace Directive 98/79/EC. This proposal clarifies the scope of the legislation by indicating explicitly that it encompasses devices which provide information concerning the predisposition to a medical condition or a disease. It also substantially strengthens many aspects linked to these tests. It classifies them in a high risk class, reinforces the conformity assessment procedures to be followed by the manufacturer before placing such tests on the market, introduces more detailed instructions for use and labelling requirements, and strengthens the requirements on clinical evidence.

Furthermore, tests offered by means of information society services ([3]) to a natural or legal person established in the Union will have to comply with the future Regulation at the latest when placed on the market. In addition, devices that are not placed on the market but are used in the context of a commercial activity for the provision of a diagnostic or therapeutic service offered by means of information society services or by other means of communication to a natural or legal person established in the Union will have to comply with the future Regulation.

The Commission's proposal does not foresee restrictions with regard to public access to genetic tests, which are however being discussed in the legislative process.

([1]) OJ L 331, 7.12.1998, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2012) 541 final.
([3]) As defined in Article 1(2) of Directive 98/34/EC.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003581/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Livre circulação de mercadorias

Considerando o seguinte:

— O registo automóvel e a dificuldade em transferir veículos entre os Estados-Membros são uma das queixas mais frequentes dos cidadãos europeus;

— Os carros comprados no estrangeiro e a dificuldade de conduzir legalmente noutro país são reveladores da necessidade de novas regras no que respeita ao funcionamento do mercado interno;

— Os casos de automóveis furtados que são registados novamente noutro Estado-Membro são um outro problema; neste momento, não existe nenhuma base de dados que permita saber se um carro roubado se encontra registado noutro país da União Europeia;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a proposta da Comissão no que respeita à simplificação de transferência de veículos entre os 27 Estados da UE?

2. Está prevista a criação de uma base de dados para os casos de automóveis furtados num Estado-Membro e registado noutro país da UE?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(7 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de informar o Senhor Deputado de que a Comissão adotou uma proposta de regulamento que simplifica a transferência no interior do mercado único de veículos a motor registados noutro Estado-Membro em 4 de abril de 2012 ([1]).

Esta proposta prevê que um Estado-Membro só possa exigir o registo no seu território de um veículo registado noutro Estado-Membro se o titular do certificado de matrícula tiver a sua residência normal no seu território. A proposta inclui também uma disposição que prevê que, sempre que o titular do certificado de matrícula transferir a sua residência normal para outro Estado-Membro, deve requerer o registo no prazo de seis meses após a sua chegada.

As disposições já mencionadas são complementadas por disposições que simplificam os procedimentos para os pedidos de novo registo dos veículos e reduzem as formalidades administrativas e burocráticas para os cidadãos, graças a um sistema eletrónico de intercâmbio de informações entre os Estados-Membros. De acordo com o artigo 7.°, n.° 1, as autoridades de registo automóvel devem conceder às suas homólogas de outros Estados-Membros acesso aos dados armazenados nos registos automóveis oficiais sobre os elementos definidos no anexo I da proposta. Mais concretamente, dois elementos mencionados no anexo dizem respeito a veículos furtados ou a chapas e/ou certificados de matrícula furtados.

A proposta encontra-se atualmente em fase de debate no Parlamento Europeu e no Conselho.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003581/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Free movement of goods

Motor vehicle registration and the difficulty of transferring vehicles between Member States represent one of the European public's most common complaints.

The issue of cars bought abroad and the difficulty of driving legally in another country indicate that new rules on the functioning of the internal market are needed.

Stolen motor vehicles that are re-registered in another Member State are another problem; there is currently no database to show whether a stolen car has been registered in another EU country.

1. How does the Commission propose to simplify the transfer of vehicles between the 27 EU Member States?

2. Does it plan to create a database for motor vehicles stolen in one Member State and registered in another?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it adopted a proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the single market on 4 April 2012 ([1]).

This proposal provides that a Member State may only require registration on its territory of a vehicle registered in another Member State if the holder of the registration certificate has his normal residence on its territory. The proposal also contains a provision that where the holder of the registration certificate moves his normal residence to another Member State, he shall request registration within a period of six months following his arrival.

The above is complemented by provisions simplifying the procedures for the re-registration of vehicles and reducing the administrative and bureaucratic formalities on citizens through an electronic system for the exchange of information between Member States. According to Article 7.1, vehicle registration authorities shall grant their counterparts in other Member States access to the data stored in the official vehicle registers on data items set out in Annex I of the proposal. In particular, two items mentioned in the annex concern stolen vehicles and stolen registration certificates and/or plates.

The proposal is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003582/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Golpe de Estado na República Centro-Africana

Considerando o seguinte:

— Na República Centro-Africana, rebeldes da coligação Séléka conquistaram, no passado domingo, a capital, Bangui, pondo em fuga o Presidente, François Bozizé;

— Vive-se uma situação caótica, com pilhagens por toda a parte;

— Nos combates pelo controlo de Bangui foram mortos 13 militares sul-africanos;

— A Cruz Vermelha Internacional pediu para deslocar o seu pessoal para Bangui, dizendo ter informação de muitos feridos;

— A França, antiga potência colonial, anunciou o reforço do seu dispositivo militar no país — são agora 550 soldados — para proteger cerca de 1 200 franceses que ali residem;

— Muitas habitações na capital, principalmente de estrangeiros, têm sido vandalizadas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem acompanhado a evolução da situação?

2. Que posição oficial assume a União Europeia em relação ao golpe de Estado descrito e asituação caótica verificada?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A AR/VP remete o Senhor Deputado para as declarações apresentadas a 25 de março e 22 de abril de 2013, nas quais manifestou a sua grave preocupação quanto à continuada deterioração da segurança na República Centro-Africana. A AR/VP condenou de imediato a violenta tomada do poder e a substituição inconstitucional do Governo pela coligação rebelde Seleka, em 24 de março. Por diversas vezes, instou todas as partes a tomar medidas concretas para proteger a população civil e repor a ordem e a segurança públicas.

A AR/VP acolhe favoravelmente, em particular, os constantes esforços dos Chefes de Estado da Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Central para estabelecer condições que permitam uma transição política na República Centro-Africana, tendo em vista o regresso à ordem constitucional.

A Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a evolução da situação no país, em coordenação com a comunidade internacional e as instâncias regionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003582/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Coup d'état in the Central African Republic

On Sunday 24 March 2013, Séléka coalition rebels took the capital of the Central African Republic, Bangui, forcing President François Bozizé to flee.

The situation is chaotic, with widespread looting.

Thirteen South African soldiers were killed in the fighting to control Bangui.

The International Red Cross has requested permission to send its personnel into Bangui, saying it has had reports of many casualties.

France, the former colonial power, has announced that it is stepping up its military presence in the country — currently 550 troops — to protect some 1 200 French nationals living there.

Many homes in the capital, mainly belonging to foreigners, have been vandalised.

1. Has the Commission been monitoring the situation?

2. What is the official EU position on the *coup d'état* and the chaotic situation in the country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to its statements issued respectively on 25 March and 22 April 2013 in which she expressed her serious concerns over the continuing deterioration of the security situation in the Central African Republic. The HR/VP immediately condemned the violent seizure of power and the unconstitutional change of government by the rebel coalition SELEKA on 24 March. At several times, she urged all parties to take concrete measures to protect the civilian population, to restore public order and security.

The HR/VP particularly welcomes the constant efforts of the Head of States of the Economic Community of Central African States to set out the conditions of a political transition in the Central African Republic in view of a return of constitutional order.

The Commission monitors very closely the developments in the country, in coordination with the international community and the region.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003583/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Quebra de confiança no setor bancário

Considerando que os contornos do resgate em Chipre, designadamente, o imposto extraordinário aplicado aos depósitos bancários, tiveram como consequência uma quebra enorme de confiança no setor bancário;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como encara a quebra da confiança não só entre os bancos, mas também entre os cidadãos?

2. Não teme que, caso os cidadãos considerem que já não têm os seus depósitos garantidos e recorram aos levantamentos em massa, se assista a uma falência generalizada de bancos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de maio de 2013)

Chipre é um caso único devido à dimensão do seu setor bancário, conjugado com a sua estrutura, nível de assunção de riscos e supervisão insuficiente. As medidas adotadas são adaptadas à situação absolutamente excecional de Chipre, tendo em vista a restabelecer a viabilidade do setor bancário, protegendo, ao mesmo tempo, todos os depósitos até 100 000 euros, em conformidade com os princípios da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003583/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Loss of confidence in the banking sector

The terms of the Cyprus bailout, namely the special tax on bank deposits, have led to a huge loss of confidence in the banking sector.

1. How does the Commission view the loss of confidence among banks and citizens alike?

2. Does it not fear a widespread banking collapse should citizens, believing their deposits to be at risk, resort to mass withdrawals?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003584/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Atos onerosos para as PME

Considerando o seguinte:

— A Comissão tem vindo a desenvolver esforços no sentido de simplificar o ambiente regulamentar e administrativo em que as PME operam, identificando os atos legislativos mais onerosos para as PME e microempresas para posteriormente estabelecer a sua estratégia de ação;

— É necessário identificar e medir os efeitos nas PME de propostas políticas e legislativas;

— Em matérias como as qualificações profissionais, a proteção de dados ou a adjudicação de contratos, a Comissão já tomou medidas para melhorar e simplificar a legislação da UE;

Pergunto à Comissão se serão encetadas mais ações relativamente aos demais domínios?

Resposta dada por Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão
(7 de maio de 2013)

Para reduzir a carga administrativa imposta pela legislação da UE, a Comissão apresentou propostas que, depois de aprovadas pelos colegisladores, originarão poupanças no valor de 30,8 mil milhões de euros por ano. Além disso, uma consulta pública à escala da UE, denominada «Quais são os dez atos legislativos mais onerosos para as PME?», realizada durante o último trimestre de 2012, permitiu identificar uma lista de mais de 40 domínios de intervenção e medidas legislativas da UE que são considerados os mais onerosos pelas PME e pelas suas organizações representativas. Os referidos domínios de regulamentação da UE incluem: os produtos químicos, o IVA, a segurança dos produtos, a legislação sobre resíduos e a legislação relacionada com o mercado de trabalho. (A lista completa figura em anexo à Comunicação da Comissão de março de 2013 intitulada «Regulamentação inteligente — Responder às necessidades das pequenas e médias empresas» ([1])).

A Comissão está atualmente a avaliar a adequação de todo o leque de medidas regulamentares da UE, a fim de identificar os casos em que é possível reduzir a carga regulamentar e simplificar a legislação sem pôr em causa os seus objetivos, em conformidade com a Comunicação de dezembro de 2012 sobre a «Adequação da regulamentação da UE» ([2]). Esta avaliação incluirá uma análise mais aprofundada dos resultados da consulta sobre os dez atos legislativos mais onerosos. Prevemos que os resultados da avaliação sejam publicados em meados do ano em curso.

([1]) COM(2013) 122 final
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0122:FIN:PT:PDF
([2]) COM(2012) 746.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003584/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Legislative burden on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

The Commission has been making efforts to simplify the regulatory and administrative environment for SMEs, identifying the legislation that is most burdensome for SMEs and microenterprises, so it can then set out its strategy for action.

The effects of political and legislative proposals on SMEs need to be identified and measured.

The Commission has already taken steps to improve and simplify EU legislation in areas like professional qualifications, data protection and procurement.

Will the Commission be taking further action in other areas?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission has made proposals to reduce administrative burden created by EU legislation which, when all approved by the co-legislators, will lead to savings worth EUR 30.8 billion each year. Furthermore, the result of an EU-wide public consultation, called the 'TOP-10 most burdensome legislative acts for SMEs', conducted during the last quarter of 2012, identifies a list of more than 40 EU policy areas and legislative measures that are considered as the most burdensome by SMEs and their representative organisations. The areas of EU regulation concerned include: chemicals, VAT, product safety, waste legislation and labour market related legislation. (See complete list annexed to the Commission Communication of March 2013 on 'Smart regulation — Responding to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises' ([1])); http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0122:FIN:EN:PDF

The Commission is currently conducting a review of the fitness of the full range of EU regulatory measures to identify where further reduction of regulatory burden and simplification can be achieved without undermining the aims of the legislation, in accordance with its December 2012 Communication on 'EU regulatory fitness' ([2]). This review will include further analysis of the feedback from the TOP-10 consultation. The results of the review are planned to be published around the middle of the year.

([1]) COM(2013) 122 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 746.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003585/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Incumprimento de Chipre do acordo de resgate com a Troika

Após árduas negociações, o Eurogrupo terá chegado a acordo para um plano de resgate de Chipre. Caso Chipre não respeite a sua parte do acordo, nomeadamente a taxa sobre os depósitos bancários superiores a 100 mil euros:

— está a Comissão preparada para uma eventual saída do euro por parte de Chipre?

— que consequências poderá ter para a zona euro uma eventual saída de Chipre da moedaúnica?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está plenamente empenhada em preservar a integridade da área do euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003585/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Failure of Cyprus to honour the bailout agreement with the Troika

Following tough negotiations, the Eurogroup has agreed on a bailout plan for Cyprus. If Cyprus fails to honour its side of the agreement, specifically in regard to the levy on bank deposits in excess of EUR 100 000:

— Is the Commission prepared for the possibility of Cyprus leaving the euro?

— What potential consequences could Cyprus leaving the single currency have for the euro area?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission is fully committed to preserve the integrity of the euro area.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003586/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Farmacovigilância

Considerando que:

— O sistema de farmacovigilância da União Europeia tem como objetivo assegurar um elevado nível de proteção da saúde pública. No âmbito deste sistema, tenta-se garantir a segurança dos medicamentos: em caso de efeitos secundários adversos com um nível de risco inaceitável em condições normais de utilização, os medicamentos são rapidamente retirados do mercado;

— A Comissão adotou um regulamento que determina que, a partir do próximo mês de setembro, os folhetos dos medicamentos sujeitos a monitorização adicional deverão exibir um triângulo invertido, um símbolo facilmente identificável, alertando os pacientes e profissionais de saúde para os eventuais efeitos secundários inesperados.

Pergunta-se:

A obrigatoriedade do uso deste símbolo será para os medicamentos com entrada no mercado a partir de que data?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

Salienta-se que o triângulo invertido não é um sinal de aviso. Ao invés, pretende identificar os produtos que estão sujeitos a monitorização adicional. O símbolo irá aumentar a sensibilização dos pacientes e profissionais de saúde para o conceito de monitorização adicional, que diz respeito a medicamentos que estão sujeitos a monitorização mais intensa após a sua comercialização, para que novas informações possam ser imediatamente partilhadas com as autoridades reguladoras, a comunidade médica, os detentores da autorização de comercialização e os pacientes.

De acordo com o Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 198/2013 da Comissão ([1]), os produtos autorizados depois de 1 de setembro de 2013 deverão usar o símbolo a partir da data de entrada no mercado. Os produtos autorizados antes de 1 de setembro de 2013 estão sujeitos a uma introdução progressiva a fim de evitar qualquer escassez na distribuição. Neste contexto, os detentores da autorização de comercialização não estão obrigados a retirar ou a reembalar os produtos que já foram colocados no mercado sem o símbolo.

([1]) JO L 65 de 8.3.2013, p. 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003586/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Pharmacovigilance

The EU pharmacovigilance system aims to ensure a high level of public health protection. The system aims to ensure that medicines are safe. In the event of adverse side effects with an unacceptable risk level under normal conditions of use, medicines are quickly taken off the market.

The Commission has adopted a regulation laying down that, from September 2013, package leaflets for medicines subject to additional monitoring will have to display an inverted triangle, as an easily identifiable symbol to warn patients and healthcare professionals of possible unexpected side effects.

From what date will it be compulsory to use this symbol for medicines coming on to the market?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

It should be pointed out that the inverted triangle is not a warning sign. Instead, it identifies products that are subject to additional monitoring. The symbol will raise awareness of patients and healthcare professionals to the concept of additional monitoring, which concerns medicinal products that are subject to more intensive post marketing monitoring, so that new emerging information can be immediately shared with the regulatory authorities, medical communities, marketing authorisation holders and patients.

In accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 198/2013 ([1]) products authorised after 1 September 2013 should use the symbol as of the date of placing the product on the market. Products authorised before 1 September 2013 are subject to a phased-in implementation to avoid any supply shortages. In this context marketing authorisation holders are not obliged to recall or repackage products which have been already placed on the market without the symbol.

([1]) OJ L 65, 8.3.2013, p. 17.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003587/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: O impacto da crise económica no setor da educação na Europa

Considerando o seguinte:

— De acordo com um relatório elaborado para a Comissão Europeia pela rede Eurydice, a crise económica provocou uma diminuição dos orçamentos da educação em 8 dos 25 Estados-Membros avaliados: Grécia, Hungria, Itália, Lituânia, Portugal, Estónia, Polónia, Espanha e Reino Unido (Escócia);

— É necessária uma abordagem coerente em matéria de investimento público na educação e na formação, sob pena de a Europa ficar aquém dos seus concorrentes, com repercussões alarmantes no que respeita ao desemprego;

— Apesar de a Comissão ter vindo a empreender um grande esforço no combate ao desemprego jovem, a aposta na educação e na formação e a melhoria da qualidade e da oferta devem também ser uma prioridade, sob pena de não se obterem os níveis de crescimento desejados;

Quais as medidas inscritas na agenda da Comissão para minimizar os impactos da crise sentida no setor da educação?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

Desde o início da estratégia «Europa 2020», a Comissão tem convidado, com insistência os Estados-Membros para que deem prioridade ao investimento na educação e prossigam com as reformas para melhorar os seus sistemas de formação e de educação. O principal instrumento ao serviço da Comissão na promoção deste tipo de políticas são as «recomendações por país» ([1]), que a Comissão propõe ao fim de cada Semestre Europeu, a fim de prestar orientações aos Estados-Membros.

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado em especial para a Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013 (AAC) ([2]), na qual a Comissão sublinha que os investimentos na educação, investigação, inovação e energia deveriam ser prioritários e, se possível, reforçados, tendo o cuidado de assegurar a eficiência de tal despesa. Na sua comunicação «Repensar a Educação», de novembro de 2012, a Comissão convidou os Estados-Membros a promover debates nacionais sobre as formas de instaurar mecanismos de financiamento sustentáveis, por forma a melhorar a estabilidade e a eficiência dos sistemas de formação e de educação.

A AAC de 2013 também apelou a uma melhoria do desempenho dos sistemas de educação e de formação, bem como dos níveis gerais das competências, aproximando os mundos do trabalho e do ensino. Neste sentido, a «Aliança Europeia da Aprendizagem» (que se irá focar em melhorar a qualidade e a oferta de contratos de aprendizagem e promover parcerias nacionais para os sistemas de formação em alternância) será lançada em 2 de julho de 2013.

Além disso, a Comissão adotou, em 5 de dezembro de 2012, uma proposta de recomendação do Conselho relativa à instituição de uma «Garantia para a Juventude» ([3]), a fim de assegurar que todos os jovens até aos 25 anos beneficiam de uma oferta de emprego de qualidade, da prossecução dos estudos, de um contrato de aprendizagem ou estágio no prazo de quatro meses a contar da conclusão dos seus estudos ou da perda do emprego.

([1]) «Recomendações por País». http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_pt.htm
([2]) AAC — Análise Anual do Crescimento.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9221&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003587/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: The impact of the economic crisis on Europe's education sector

According to a report produced by the Eurydice network for the Commission, the economic crisis has led to education budgets being cut in eight of the 25 Member States assessed: Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Estonia, Poland, Spain and the UK (Scotland).

We need a consistent approach to public investment in education and training; otherwise Europe will fall behind its competitors, with alarming consequences for unemployment.

Although the Commission has been making a concerted effort to tackle youth unemployment, it should also prioritise investment in education and training, and improve quality and supply; otherwise we will not achieve the desired growth rates.

What measures to minimise the impact of the crisis in the education sector are on the Commission's agenda?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Since the inception of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission has consistently called on MS to prioritise investment in education and pursue reforms to improve their education and training systems. The main instrument at the disposal of the Commission to promote this type of policy are CSRs ([1]) which the Commission proposes at the end of each European Semester in order to give guidance to MS.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member, in particular, to the 2013 AGS ([2]) where the Commission stresses that investments in education, research, innovation and energy should be prioritised and, where possible, strengthened, while ensuring the efficiency of such expenditure. In its communication 'Rethinking Education' of November 2012, the Commission also called on MS to stimulate national debates on ways to provide sustainable funding mechanisms to enhance stability and efficiency of education and training systems.

The 2013 AGS also called for raising the performance of education and training systems and the overall skill levels, linking the worlds of work and education more closely together. In this respect, the 'European Alliance for Apprenticeships' (which will focus on improving the quality and supply of apprenticeships and promoting national partnerships for dual vocational training systems) will be launched on 2 July 2013.

Furthermore, on 5 December 2012, the Commission adopted a Proposal for a Council Recommendation on establishing a 'Youth Guarantee' ([3]) to ensure that all young people up to the age of 25 receive a quality offer of a job, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

([1]) CSR — Country-specific Recommendations (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/).
([2]) AGS — Annual Growth Survey.
([3]) ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9221&langId=en

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003588/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Direitos dos passageiros dos autocarros

Considerando que:

— Com a entrada em vigor, no início do presente mês, do regulamento que estabelece os direitos dos viajantes de autocarros, a União Europeia torna-se o primeiro espaço integrado de direitos de passageiros do mundo, uma vez que os passageiros têm proteção independentemente do meio de transporte utilizado.

— As novas regras relativas ao transporte em autocarro, diretamente aplicáveis nos Estados-Membros, impõem um conjunto de obrigações às empresas de transporte. A essas obrigações corresponde um conjunto de direitos dos passageiros.

Sabendo que, antes de a Comissão ter decidido, há cinco anos, apresentar uma proposta sobre os direitos dos passageiros dos autocarros, não havia qualquer acordo internacional aplicável na maior parte dos Estados-Membros nem qualquer legislação da UE que estabelecesse os direitos gerais para este modo de transporte, como será coordenada a aplicação efetiva da legislação em matéria de direitos dos passageiros dos autocarros?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

O Regulamento respeitante aos direitos dos passageiros no transporte de autocarro ([1]) (a seguir designado «Regulamento») entrou em vigor em 1 de março de 2013. A fim de garantir a sua correta aplicação, a Comissão começou por dar início a procedimentos por infração contra os Estados-Membros que não nomearam o organismo nacional de aplicação do Regulamento e não adotaram a legislação nacional que estabelece o regime de sanções aplicável em caso de infração ao Regulamento. A Comissão está igualmente a verificar a legislação dos Estados-Membros que procederam à sua notificação.

Em segundo lugar, a Comissão vai organizar regularmente reuniões com os organismos nacionais de aplicação da legislação, com vista a alcançar um entendimento comum sobre as diferentes disposições do Regulamento e assegurar a sua aplicação coerente, bem como para reforçar a cooperação entre os organismos nacionais de aplicação. A primeira reunião está prevista para julho de 2013.

Por último, em conformidade com o artigo 32.° do Regulamento, a Comissão deve apresentar ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho, até 2 de março de 2016, um relatório sobre o funcionamento e os efeitos do Regulamento, acompanhado, se necessário, de uma proposta legislativa.

([1]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 181/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de fevereiro de 2011, respeitante aos direitos dos passageiros no transporte de autocarro e que altera o Regulamento (CE) n. ° 2006/2004 (JO L55 de 28.2.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003588/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Bus and coach passenger rights

— With the entry into force, at the start of this month, of the regulation on bus and coach passenger rights, the EU has become the world's foremost integrated area for passenger rights, as passengers are protected regardless of the mode of transport they use.

— The new bus and coach transportation rules, which are directly applicable in the Member States, impose a series of obligations on transport companies. These obligations correspond to a series of passenger rights.

Before the Commission decided to table a proposal on bus and coach passenger rights five years ago, there was no international agreement applicable to the majority of Member States or any EU legislation establishing general rights for this mode of transport. In view of that, how will the Commission coordinate the effective implementation of bus and coach passenger rights legislation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Bus and Coach Passenger Rights Regulation (the regulation) ([1]) became applicable on 1 March 2013. In order to ensure its correct implementation, the Commission first initiated pre-infringement proceedings against the Member States which had failed to nominate a national body responsible for the enforcement of the regulation and to adopt national legislation laying down penalties applicable to infringements of the regulation. The Commission is also currently checking the legislation of those Member States which have communicated it.

Secondly, the Commission will organise meetings with the national enforcement bodies on a regular basis to agree on a common understanding of the different provisions of the regulation and to ensure their coherent application and also to enhance cooperation between the national enforcement bodies. The first meeting is scheduled for July 2013.

Finally, in accordance with Article 32 of the regulation, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council by 2 March 2016 on the operation and effects of the regulation, accompanied, if necessary, by a legislative proposal.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003589/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Visita de John Kerry ao Iraque

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo jornal português Público, o Secretário de Estado dos EUA, John Kerry, fez uma visita surpresa a Bagdad, com a intenção de pedir ao primeiro-ministro Nouri al-Maliki uma maior cooperação do Governo iraquiano para lidar com a guerra civil na Síria.

Washington suspeita que o espaço aéreo Iraquiano esteja a ser utilizado por aviões iranianos para transporte de armas para o regime do Presidente Bashar al-Assad.

A Comissão tem conhecimento desta situação?

A UE tem mantido conversações com o governo iraquiano a este respeito?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente manifestou a sua preocupação relativamente à utilização pelo Irão do território e do espaço aéreo iraquiano para prestar apoio militar (formação, equipamento e armas) ao regime sírio, em violação da Resolução 1747 do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas.

Em resposta à situação, foi efetuada uma diligência diplomática da UE junto do Primeiro-Ministro Al Maliki pelo Chefe da delegação da UE no Iraque em 20 de dezembro de 2012. Durante a diligência a UE apelou ao Iraque para que prosseguisse os seus esforços a fim de evitar que o apoio do Irão atravesse o Iraque, nomeadamente, através do aumento da frequência da supervisão dos voos iranianos com destino à Síria. Nas Conclusões do Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros, de 22 de abril de 2013, a UE apelou mais uma vez ao Governo iraquiano, para que envide todos os esforços para evitar qualquer fornecimento ou transferência de armas para o regime de Assad e para os seus apoiantes na Síria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003589/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: John Kerry's visit to Iraq

According to the Portuguese newspaper *Público*, US Secretary of State John Kerry has made a surprise visit to Baghdad to ask Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki for greater cooperation from his government regarding the Syrian civil war.

Washington suspects that Iranian aircraft are using Iraqi airspace to transport weapons to President Bashar al-Assad's regime.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Has the EU held talks with the Iraqi Government in this regard?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The HR/VP has expressed concern that Iran is using Iraqi territory and airspace to provide military support (training, equipment and weapons) to the Syrian regime, in contravention of the UN Security Council Resolution 1747.

In response to the situation, an EU Demarche was carried out to Prime Minister Al Maliki by the Head of the EU Delegation in Iraq on 20 December 2012. The EU in the demarche called on Iraq to make further efforts to prevent Iran support passing through Iraq, including by significantly increasing the frequency of the checks of Iranian flights to Syria. The EU called again on the Iraqi government, in Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 22 April 2013, to do whatever is necessary to prevent any supply or transfer of arms to the Assad regime and its supporters in Syria.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003590/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Europa e EUA — Conflitos na área da agricultura

De acordo com a edição «online» da Associated Press (AP), os líderes da União Europeia não querem que as negociações incluam discussões sobre restrições a culturas geneticamente modificadas e outros regulamentos, que mantêm os produtos norte-americanos fora da Europa.

O maior acordo livre de comércio, anunciado há algumas semanas pelo presidente Obama, poderá ser inviabilizado pelos conflitos na área agrícola.

1. Em que ponto se encontram as referidas negociações?

2. De que contrapartidas beneficiará a UE com este acordo?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Sr. Deputado para as suas respostas às seguintes questões escritas: E-533/13, E-1348/13, E-1814/13, E-1815/13, E-1816/13, E-1817/13, E-2147/13, E-3080/13 and E-3117/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003590/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Europe and the United States — Agricultural disputes

According to Associated Press (AP) online, EU leaders do not want trade negotiations to include talks on restrictions on genetically modified crops and other regulations that keep US products out of Europe.

Agricultural disputes could jeopardise the biggest free trade agreement in history, which was announced several weeks ago by President Obama.

1. What is the state of play with these negotiations?

2. How will the EU benefit from this agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-533/13, E-1348/13, E-1814/13, E-1815/13, E-1816/13, E-1817/13, E-2147/13, and E-3117/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003591/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Alface contaminada

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo jornal italiano *La Stampa*, as autoridades alemãs detetaram veneno de rato em lotes de alface importada de Itália. Até agora, foram destruídos 105 dos 110 lotes importados, não se sabendo do paradeiro dos restantes 5. O Ministério da Saúde italiano, por seu lado e em comunicado, afirmou que «Não se pode excluir a hipótese de a contaminação ter acontecido no armazém do grossista alemão».

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento da referida situação?

2. Já apurou a Comissão a origem deste problema?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

Em 7 de março de 2013, a Comissão foi informada, através do Sistema de Alerta Rápido para os Géneros Alimentícios e Alimentos para Animais (RASFF), pela Alemanha no que diz respeito a veneno de rato detetado em alfaces importadas da Itália. O alerta do RASFF foi emitido no mesmo dia.

Estão em curso investigações nos Estados-Membros em causa por forma a se identificar onde e como a contaminação ocorreu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003591/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Contaminated lettuce

According to the Italian newspaper *La Stampa*, the German authorities have detected rat poison in batches of lettuce imported from Italy. To date, 105 of the 110 imported batches have been destroyed. The whereabouts of the remaining five are unknown. For its part, the Italian Ministry of Health has issued a statement saying that it cannot rule out the possibility that the contamination occurred in the German wholesaler's warehouse.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. Has the Commission ascertained the source of the problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission was notified through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) by Germany on 7 March 2013 regarding rat poison found on lettuce from Italy. A RASFF alert was issued on the same day.

Investigations are ongoing in the concerned Member States to identify where and how the contamination took place.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003592/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações de Abebe Selassie

Em entrevista à agência Lusa, Abebe Selassie, o chefe da missão do FMI para Portugal admite que o aumento do desemprego foi «muito pior» do que o esperado e diz que a única forma duradoura de recuperar emprego é acabar com o ajustamento o mais rapidamente possível.

Abebe Selassie referiu ainda que «o resultado do desemprego é muito infeliz, é mesmo muito pior do que o esperado. É exatamente devido a isto que as metas do défice estão a ser revistas, devido à preocupação de tentar evitar mais pressões sobre o emprego».

Concorda a Comissão com a análise feita pelo FMI? Tendo em conta o aumento exponencial do desemprego em Portugal, em grande parte em virtude das orientações impostas pela Troika ao Governo português, qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

De acordo com os princípios estabelecidos, a Comissão não comenta as declarações proferidas por outras instituições.

No que respeita à situação do mercado de trabalho em Portugal, e de acordo com as previsões da Comissão da primavera de 2013, o desemprego em Portugal deverá atingir 18,2 % em 2013 e voltar a aumentar para 18,5 % para 2014. Este valor é significativamente mais elevado do que o previsto no início do programa e está principalmente relacionado com três fatores. Em primeiro lugar, a atividade económica, medida pela evolução do PIB, caiu mais do que era esperado. Em segundo lugar, a composição do crescimento evoluiu mais fortemente do que o previsto no sentido dos setores orientados para o exterior, geralmente menos intensivos em termos de emprego do que os setores orientados para o mercado interno. Em terceiro lugar, a resposta dos salários ao aumento do desemprego foi bastante limitada, o que indica que a herança da excessiva regulamentação do mercado do emprego vigente em Portugal no passado faz com que a rigidez continue a ser elevada, apesar de ter sido parcialmente atenuada pelas políticas adotadas no quadro do programa.

A Comissão está empenhada, em cooperação com as autoridades portuguesas, em ajudar a atenuar o impacto do aumento do desemprego na população, em especial através dos Fundos Estruturais da UE e pela aplicação de políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho, fortemente incrementadas no âmbito do mais recente exercício de reprogramação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003592/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Statements by Abebe Selassie

In an interview with the Lusa news agency, Abebe Selassie, head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission to Portugal, has admitted that the rise in unemployment had been much worse than expected and said that the only lasting way to restore jobs was to end the adjustment programme as quickly as possible.

Abebe Selassie also mentioned that the consequences of unemployment were very unfortunate and much worse than expected. He said that that was precisely why the deficit targets were being revised, in order to try to avoid putting further pressure on jobs.

Does the Commission agree with the IMF's analysis? In view of the exponential increase in unemployment in Portugal, largely resulting from the guidelines imposed on the Portuguese Government by the Troika, what is the Commission's position on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

In line with established principles, the Commission does not comment on statements of other institutions.

As regards the labour market situation in Portugal, according to the Commission's 2013 Spring forecast unemployment in Portugal is expected to reach 18.2% in 2013 and a further rise to 18.5% is projected in 2014. This is significantly higher than expected at the outset of the programme and mainly related to three factors. First, overall economic activity as measured by GDP has fallen by more than expected. Second, the composition of growth has changed more strongly towards the externally oriented sectors which are in general less employment intensive than the domestically oriented ones. Third, the wage response to the increase in unemployment has been quite muted which indicates that, as a legacy of the past overregulation of the Portuguese labour market, rigidities continue to be high even though they have been partly alleviated by the policies adopted in the framework of the programme.

In cooperation with the Portuguese authorities, the Commission is actively seeking to help cushion the impact of the rise in unemployment on the population, particularly through the EU Structural Funds, with active labour market policies having been strongly increased in the recent reprogramming exercise.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003593/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações de Abebe Selassie II

Em entrevista à agência Lusa, Abebe Selassie, o chefe da missão do FMI para Portugal admite que o aumento do desemprego foi «muito pior» que o esperado e diz que a única forma duradoura de recuperar emprego é acabar o ajustamento o mais rápido possível.

Abebe Selassie referiu ainda que «o resultado do desemprego é muito infeliz, é mesmo muito pior que o esperado. É exatamente devido a isto que as metas do défice estão a ser revistas, devido à preocupação de tentar evitar mais pressões sobre o emprego».

Considerando que nos EUA foram criados cerca de 2,5 milhões de postos de trabalho nos últimos três anos, na sequência de vários estímulos económicos, pergunto à Comissão se, à semelhança do que foi feito nos EUA, prevê a criação de estímulos económicos para a diminuição do desemprego no espaço comunitário? Em caso afirmativo, quais?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

A evolução do desemprego em Portugal é preocupante, tal como em diversos outros Estados-Membros da UE. O combate ao desemprego constitui uma das principais prioridades a nível da UE. A este propósito, foram tomadas medidas para delinear estratégias comuns para combater o elevado desemprego:

— O Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego, com base no qual a Comissão apresentou um vasto leque de propostas para favorecer o crescimento e cuja execução é regularmente revista;

— A Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013, que define cinco prioridades para o crescimento sustentável e o emprego, nomeadamente convidando os Estados-Membros a prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento;

— O Pacote relativo ao emprego dos jovens, que inclui um conjunto de medidas destinadas a ajudar os Estados-Membros a combater o desemprego dos jovens e a exclusão social;

— O Pacote do Investimento Social, em que a Comissão insta os Estados-Membros da UE a colocar a tónica sobre o investimento social e dá orientações aos Estados-Membros sobre a aplicação de políticas sociais mais eficientes e eficazes.

Portugal está a implementar uma vasta gama de reformas que se prevê venham a melhorar o funcionamento do mercado de trabalho a médio prazo. Estas reformas estão a ser complementadas por um reforço das políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho com vista a melhorar a empregabilidade dos desempregados e a facilitar um regresso mais rápido ao emprego. Estas medidas incluem regimes de subvenções aos salários para facilitar a contratação dos grupos mais vulneráveis, um programa orientado para combater o desemprego juvenil e uma reforma dos serviços públicos de emprego com vista a melhorar as medidas de ativação e a facilitar o processo de correspondência entre as ofertas de emprego e os desempregados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003593/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Statements by Abebe Selassie II

In an interview with the Lusa news agency, Abebe Selassie, head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission to Portugal, has admitted that the rise in unemployment was much worse than expected and said that the only lasting way to restore jobs was to end the adjustment programme as quickly as possible.

Abebe Selassie also mentioned that the consequences of unemployment were very unfortunate and much worse than expected. He said that that was precisely why the deficit targets were being revised, in order to try to avoid putting further pressure on jobs.

Given that 2.5 million jobs have been created in the US in the last three years, following several economic stimulus packages, is the Commission planning economic stimuli to reduce EU unemployment, similar to those in the US? If so, what are they?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

Unemployment developments are worrying in Portugal as well as in a number of EU Member States. Tackling unemployment is a key priority at the EU level. In this regards, action has been taken to devise common strategies to tackle high unemployment:

— The Compact for Growth and Jobs, on the basis of which the Commission presented a wide range of growth-enhancing proposals and which implementation is regularly reviewed;

— The 2013 Annual Growth Survey, which set five priorities for sustainable growth and jobs, including inviting Member States to pursue differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation;

— The Youth Employment Package, which includes a set of measures aiming at helping Member States to tackle youth unemployment and social exclusion;

— The Social Investment Package, where the Commission urges EU Member States to put more emphasis on social investment and gives guidance to Member States on more efficient and effective social policies.

Portugal is implementing a wide range of reforms that are expected to improve the labour market functioning over the medium term. These reforms are being complemented with a reinforcement of Active Labour Market Policies to improve the employability of the unemployed and facilitate a faster return to employment. These measures include wage subsidy schemes to facilitate hiring of the most vulnerable groups, a programme targeted to tackle youth unemployment and an overhaul of the Public Employment Services to improve activation and facilitate the matching process between job vacancies and the unemployed.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003594/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Líder iraniano disposto a dialogar com os EUA

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela comunicação social internacional, o líder supremo iraniano afirmou que não se opõe a dialogar com os Estados Unidos sobre a questão nuclear do seu país.

De que forma interpreta a Comissão a mudança de postura por parte do regime iraniano?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

Na sequência do mandato definido nas resoluções do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton, juntamente com os países do E3 +3 (China, França, Alemanha, Rússia, Reino Unido, EUA), tem vindo a desenvolver esforços diplomáticos intensos para encontrar uma solução negociada para a questão nuclear iraniana. Enquanto membro do E3+3, os Estados Unidos estiveram plenamente implicados neste processo.

Os países E3 +3 países, juntamente com a AR/VP, colaboram estreitamente na procura de uma solução diplomática global a longo prazo para a questão nuclear iraniana. Todos os países envolvidos no processo de negociação apoiam plenamente os esforços no sentido de alcançar, pelas vias diplomáticas, uma solução global para a questão nuclear iraniana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003594/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Iranian leader open to US talks

Iran's Supreme Leader has said that he is not opposed to talks with the United States regarding his country's nuclear programme, according to international media reports.

How does the Commission interpret the Iranian regime's change of attitude?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Mandated by UNSC resolutions the HR/VP Catherine Ashton, together with the countries of the E3+3 (China, France, Germany, Russia, UK, USA) has been engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to find a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. As a member of the E3+3, the US has been fully engaged in this process.

The E3+3 countries, together with the HR/VP, are collaborating closely in seeking a comprehensive long term diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. All countries engaged in the negotiating process are fully supportive in the efforts to achieve a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue though diplomacy.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003595/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: Recycling van plastic afval en autorisatie in het kader van REACH

Is de Commissie het eens met de stelling dat recycling van afval in Europa belangrijk is en door moet gaan?

Zo ja, is zij van mening dat dit ook geldt voor de recycling van afvalstromen die verscheidene concentraties bevatten van in bijlage XIV van REACH opgenomen chemische stoffen?

De Europese recyclingbedrijven melden ernstige moeilijkheden te ondervinden als gevolg van de eisen die op grond van REACH aan hen worden gesteld. Onderkent de Commissie deze moeilijkheden en zo ja, is zij ook van mening dat op EU-niveau dringend aandacht aan dit punt besteed moet worden om constante afvalrecycling in Europa te vergemakkelijken?

Acht de Commissie het haalbaar en gerechtvaardigd om mogelijkheden te overwegen ter ondersteuning van specifiek deze sector, bijvoorbeeld tijdelijke vrijstelling van recyclingactiviteiten van autorisatie onder nader te bepalen voorwaarden? Zo ja, welke mogelijkheden overweegt zij? Zo niet, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(16 mei 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid graag naar haar antwoord op vraag E-2047/2013.

De Commissie is vast voornemens om een recyclingsysteem in Europa te bevorderen dat verenigbaar is met andere beleidsdoelstellingen, zoals, voor zover haalbaar, het afbouwen van het gebruik van schadelijke chemische stoffen en de vervanging ervan door veiligere alternatieven. De REACH-verordening ([1]) voorziet in een vergunningsstelsel voor bepaalde stoffen die wegens de mogelijke gevolgen voor de menselijke gezondheid en het milieu zeer risicovol worden geacht. Hoewel deze verplichtingen niet van toepassing zijn op materialen die beschouwd worden als afvalstoffen, is de Commissie van mening dat stoffen, mengsels of voorwerpen die bij recycling of terugwinning worden geproduceerd en daardoor niet langer als afvalstof worden beschouwd, onderworpen zijn aan productwetgeving, zoals REACH.

De Commissie overweegt op dit moment geen mogelijkheden zoals de vrijstelling van stoffen, mengsels of voorwerpen van de voorschriften van REACH, zoals autorisaties, beperkingen of andere verplichtingen. Zij werkt echter samen met belanghebbenden en vertegenwoordigers van de industrie om ervoor te zorgen dat de beleidsdoelstellingen van de afvalwetgeving en de wetgeving inzake chemische stoffen kunnen worden gehaald wat betreft gerecycleerde materialen. Hierbij houdt de Commissie rekening met de specifieke behoeften en uitdagingen waar de terugwinning- en recyclingsectoren mee geconfronteerd worden.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1907/2006 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 18 december 2006 inzake de registratie en beoordeling van en de autorisatie en beperkingen ten aanzien van chemische stoffen (REACH), tot oprichting van een Europees Agentschap voor chemische stoffen, houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 1999/45/EG en houdende intrekking van Verordening (EEG) nr. 793/93 van de Raad en Verordening (EG) nr. 1488/94 van de Commissie alsmede Richtlijn 76/769/EEG van de Raad en de Richtlijnen 91/155/EEG, 93/67/EEG, 93/105/EG en 2000/21/EG van de Commissie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003595/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Plastic waste recycling and REACH authorisation

Does the Commission agree that waste recycling activities in Europe are important and should be continued?

If so, does it consider this also to be the case for the recycling of waste streams containing various concentrations of chemical substances included in Annex XIV of REACH?

The European recycling industry says that it is facing severe difficulties arising from its obligations under REACH. Does the Commission recognise these difficulties and, if so, does it agree that the issue needs to be urgently addressed at EU level in order to facilitate the continuation of waste recycling in Europe?

Does the Commission regard it feasible and justifiable to consider options such as temporarily exempting recycling activities from authorisation, subject to conditions yet to be identified, in order to help this particular industry? If so, what options is it considering? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-2047/2013.

The Commission is committed to the promotion of a recycling system in Europe, which is compatible with other policy goals, such as, where feasible, the phasing out of harmful chemicals and their substitution by safer alternatives. The REACH Regulation ([1]) sets out an authorisation regime for certain substances considered to be of very high concern, due to their potential effects on human health and the environment. While it is true that these obligations do not apply to materials that are considered waste, the Commission considers that substances, mixtures or articles resulting from recycling or recovery that have ceased to be waste are subject to product legislation, such as REACH.

The Commission does not currently envisage options such as exemption of substances, mixtures or articles from REACH requirements, such as authorisations, restrictions or other requirements. However, it is working with stakeholders and industry representatives in order to ensure that the policy objectives pursued by both the waste and chemicals legislations can be achieved in the context of recycled materials. During this exercise, the Commission is taking into account the specific needs and challenges faced by the recovery and recycling sectors.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003596/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Breach of EU animal welfare rules on Spanish pig farms

The recent investigation of Spanish pig farms conducted by the animal welfare organisation 'Compassion in World Farming' (CIWF) revealed the illegal mistreatment of pigs. Council Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs was breached in three ways. Firstly, sow stalls were in use despite the ban on sow stalls that came into force in January of this year. Secondly, fattening pigs were kept indoors in barren housing, with little or no bedding and a lack of suitable enrichment, even though the EC law requires that these animals be given straw or other natural manipulable material. Lastly, pigs seen on the farms had their tails removed, despite EU rules forbidding routine tail docking.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take in response to these findings?

2. How is the Commission going to improve the enforcement of the existing EU animal welfare rules in order to ensure that situations such as that identified by the CIWF do not recur in the future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

With regard to the partial ban on individual sow stalls, the Commission on 21 February 2013 launched infringement procedures against several non-compliant Member States. The Commission is still assessing the case against Spain on this issue.

Concerning the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]), the Commission on 8 March 2013 held the first extended working group meeting with the Member States and other stakeholders to discuss the development of guidelines. Such guidelines may assist both pig producers and Member States' authorities in their efforts to comply with the directive. Additionally, the Commission's Better Training for Safer Food programme ([2]) provides the competent authorities in the Member States training, also on the subject of pig welfare. For 2013 and 2014, four such trainings are foreseen on animal welfare in pig production.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009; p. 5.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/food/calendar.html#Animal_Welfare

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003598/13
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(28 mars 2013)

Angående: Kommissionsledamot Oettingers uttalande om skiffergas under den parlamentariska debatten gällande färdplanen för 2050

I samband med debatten den 11 mars 2013 om parlamentets rapport avseende kommissionens färdplan för 2050 ansåg kommissionsledamot Oettinger att EU:s förbrukning av naturgas skulle komma att öka med omkring 600 miljarder kubikmeter per år, och tillade att 10–15 procent av EU:s efterfrågan på gas skulle kunna tillgodoses av inhemskt producerad skiffergas.

Vad bygger kommissionsledamot Oettingers påstående på att den kommersiella produktionen av skiffergas skulle kunna uppgå till mellan 60 och 90 kubikmeter per år (dvs. 10–15 % av 600 miljarder kubikmeter)? När kommer all denna europeiska skiffergas ut på marknaden?

Har kommissionen uppskattat hur många skiffergasbrunnar man skulle behöva borra i EU för att under en tioårsperiod (t.ex. 2025–2035) säkra en årlig leverans till EU:s gasmarknad på 60–90 kubikmeter naturgas från okonventionella gastillgångar inom EU?

Svar från Günther Oettinger på kommissionens vägnar
(24 maj 2013)

I undersökningen *Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union*, som offentliggjordes av kommissionens Gemensamma forskningscentrum (JRC) den 7 september 2012, dras slutsatsen att den bästa uppskattningen av EU:s tekniskt utvinningsbara skiffergastillångar (grundat på en analys av befintlig litteratur i juli 2012, i synnerhet undersökningar som tillämpar en rad olika metoder, som experutlåtanden, litteraturöversyn, bedömning enligt metoden ”nedifrån och upp” av geologiska parametrar samt extrapolering av produktionserfarenheter) är 16 biljoner kubikmeter. Endast framtida utvinningsprojekt, som möjliggör en vetenskaplig kartläggning av befintliga tillgångar och tillhörande geologiska parametrar skulle emellertid kunna ge mer kunskap om i vilken utsträckning denna potential faktiskt är ekonomiskt utvinningsbar.

I JRC:s analsyscenarier utgår man för perioden 2025 till 2040 från en genomsnittlig årlig skiffergasproduktion i EU på 200 miljarder kubikmeter som ett optimistiskt scenario och 25 miljarder kubikmeter som ett pessimistiskt scenario. Utgående från detta ger undersökningen också en preliminär uppskattning av hur många skiffergasbrunnar som måste borras (med nuvarande teknik). Det handlar om mellan 527 brunnar per år i det pessimistiska scenariot och 4 200 brunnar per år i det optimistiska scenariot.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003598/13
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Statement by Commissioner Oettinger on shale gas during parliamentary debate on 2050 Roadmap

During the debate on 11 March 2013 on Parliament's report on the Commission's 2050 Roadmap, Commissioner Oettinger expressed the view that the EU's consumption of natural gas will increase to about 600 billion cubic metres (bcm) per year, adding that 10-15% of the EU's demand for gas could be delivered from domestically produced shale gas.

What is the source for Commissioner Oettinger's claim that the commercial production of shale gas could amount to 60-90 bcm per year (i.e. 10-15% of 600 bcm)? When will these large volumes of European shale gas come to the market?

Has the Commission made an assessment of how many shale gas wells would need to be drilled in the EU in order to secure, over a period of 10 years (e.g. 2025-2035), an annual delivery on the EU's gas market of 60-90 bcm of natural gas from unconventional gas supplies within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The study Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union published by the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) on 7 September 2012 concluded that the best estimate (based on an assessment of existing literature as of July 2012, and specifically studies applying a range of methodologies, such as expert judgment; literature review; bottom-up assessment of geological parameters and extrapolation of production experience) for European technically recoverable shale gas resources is 16 trillion cubic metres. However, only further exploration projects enabling the scientific mapping of existing resources and related geological parameters would provide more information to which extent this potential is actually economically recoverable.

The scenario analysis in the JRC study estimates for the period 2025 to 2040 average annual shale gas production in Europe of 200bcm in an optimistic scenario and of 25 bcm in a pessimistic scenario. Based on these figures, the study also provides a preliminary indicative estimate of the number of European shale gas wells to be drilled (with current technologies). Results range from 527 wells per year in the pessimistic scenario to 4200 wells per year in the optimistic scenario.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-003600/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. kovo 28 d.)

Tema: Kova su išsėtine skleroze Europoje

Europos Parlamentas dar 2012 m. rugsėjo 13 d. priėmė rašytinį pareiškimą dėl kovos su išsėtine skleroze Europoje. Priimtas rašytinis pareiškimas buvo perduotas Komisijai, Tarybai ir valstybių narių parlamentams.

1. Kokių konkrečių priemonių Komisija ketina imtis dėl kovos su išsėtine skleroze Europoje?

2. Ar Komisija imasi ar planuoja imtis veiksmų, kad svarstant lėtinių ligų klausimus būtų skatinama sudaryti vienodas galimybes gauti gydymą žmonėms, turintiems lėtinių neurologinių sutrikimų, pvz., sergantiems išsėtine skleroze, ir kad būtų skatinama jiems skirta lanksti užimtumo politika?

3. Ar Komisija nemano, jog reikėtų skatinti glaudesnį mokslininkų bendradarbiavimą ir lyginamuosius tyrimus išsėtinės sklerozės srityje vadovaujantis programa „Horizon 2020“?

T. Borgo atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. gegužės 29 d.)

Komisija per septintąją bendrąją mokslinių tyrimų programą daug investuoja į tyrimus, skirtus geriau suprasti smegenų ir nervų sistemos ligas, tarp jų išsėtinę sklerozę. Tokie tyrimai padėtų kurti geresnius gydymo ir priežiūros metodus ir kartu gerinti pacientų gyvenimo kokybę.

Nesiliaudama mąstyti apie chroniškas ligas, Komisija ieško būdų padėti valstybėms narėms spręsti tokias problemas, kaip sveikatos ugdymas ir ligų prevencija bei ligų kontrolė, įskaitant būdus ilgiau išlaikyti darbo vietose chroniškomis ligomis sergančius asmenis, sirgimą vienu metu keliomis ligomis ir ligų tyrimus. Tačiau už galimybę naudotis gydymo paslaugomis yra atsakingos tik valstybės narės.

Nauja ES bendroji tyrimų ir inovacijų programa „Horizontas 2020“, ypač jos sritis, skirta spręsti sveikatos, demografinių pokyčių ir gerovės uždavinius, turėtų užtikrinti daugiau galimybių teikti paramą smegenų sutrikimų, įskaitant išsėtinę sklerozę, tyrimams. Įgyvendinant programą „Horizontas 2020“ bus laikomasi užduočių sprendimu pagrįsto metodo, siekiant gerinti diagnostiką, geriau suprasti ir gydyti ligas, skatinti integruotą priežiūra: visos šios sritys susijusios su smegenų sutrikimų tyrimais.

Be to, 2013 m. gegužės mėn. paskelbtas Europos smegenų mėnesiu ([1]): Komisija ir suinteresuotosios šalys numato renginių, skirtų informuoti apie smegenų tyrimus ir sveikatos priežiūros problemas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003600/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Tackling multiple sclerosis in Europe

On 13 September 2012 the European Parliament adopted a written statement on tackling multiple sclerosis in Europe. The written statement adopted was forwarded to the Commission, the Council and the parliaments of the Member States.

1. What specific steps does the Commission intend to take as regards tackling multiple sclerosis in Europe?

2. Is the Commission taking or does it plan to take action to promote, in the Reflection Process on Chronic Disease, equal access to treatment and flexible employment policies for people with chronic neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis?

3. Does the Commission not feel that we should encourage closer scientific collaboration and comparative research on multiple sclerosis within the framework of Horizon 2020?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, the Commission is investing significant resources into research aimed at better understanding brain and neurological disorders, including multiple sclerosis. Such research should help develop better options for treatment and care, so as to improve the quality of life of patients.

In the context of the reflection process on chronic diseases, the Commission is identifying ways to support Member States in addressing issues such as health promotion and disease prevention, disease management including ways to keep people with chronic illness longer at work, multi-morbidity and research. Access to treatment, however, is a matter which falls under the exclusive responsibility of the Member States.

Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, is likely to provide further opportunities to support research on brain disorders, including on multiple sclerosis, in particular under its pillar on the 'Health, demographic change and well-being' challenge. Horizon 2020 will follow a problem-solving approach and will address improving diagnosis, understanding and treating diseases, and promoting integrated care, all areas fully relevant for research on brain disorders.

Finally, May 2013 is declared European Month of the Brain ([1]), with several events organised by the Commission and by stakeholders to raise awareness about brain research and healthcare issues.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003601/13
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: Ongevallenstatistieken en onverzekerde wagens

Op 19 maart 2013 publiceerde de Europese Commissie de nieuwe cijfers over het aantal verkeersdoden in de EU. Het aantal verkeersdoden in 2012 blijkt gedaald te zijn met gemiddeld 9 %. Het voorbije jaar vielen er in de EU nooit minder verkeersdoden sinds hierover statistieken worden bijgehouden. We zitten dus weer op koers om het aantal verkeersdoden te halveren tegen 2020, zoals bepaald in het EU-actieprogramma verkeersveiligheid 2011-2020.

Volgens Richtlijn 2005/14/EG moeten alle voertuigen in de EU over een wettelijke aansprakelijkheidsverzekering voor deelneming aan het verkeer van motorrijtuigen beschikken. Het blijkt echter dat er nog steeds veel mensen zich in het verkeer begeven zonder over een dergelijke verzekering te beschikken.

1. Beschikt de Commissie over gegevens met betrekking tot het aantal onverzekerde wagens die betrokken waren in ongevallen de voorbije jaren in de verschillende lidstaten? Indien ja, kan de Commissie deze bezorgen?

2. Hoeveel dodelijke slachtoffers zijn er gevallen in een ongeval waarbij een onverzekerde wagen betrokken was in 2012, en/of de voorgaande jaren?

3. Welke acties onderneemt de Commissie om het aantal onverzekerde wagens in Europa te verminderen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(24 mei 2013)

De Commissie beschikt niet over precieze cijfers over het aantal onverzekerde wagens die bij verkeersongevallen betrokken waren. Zij beschikt evenmin over cijfers over het aantal onverzekerde wagens die een dodelijk ongeval hebben veroorzaakt. De nationale instanties zouden wel over deze gegevens moeten beschikken.

De Commissie is het er volledig mee eens dat de bestrijding van rijden zonder verzekering van essentieel belang is. Overeenkomstig de Richtlijn 2009/103/EG ([1]) (de richtlijn motorrijtuigenverzekering), moeten de lidstaten de nodige maatregelen nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat alle motorrijtuigen in de EU door een verzekering tegen wettelijke aansprakelijkheid zijn gedekt.

Bovendien volgt de Commissie elke ontwikkeling op nationaal niveau op de voet, bijvoorbeeld door de lidstaten geregeld te vragen om schattingen van het aantal onverzekerde wagens te bezorgen. Dit is voor het laatst gebeurd in juli 2010.

De Commissie werkt eveneens actief samen met verenigingen van verzekeraars en schadebehandelaars op EU-niveau en bevordert beste praktijken om rijden zonder verzekering in de lidstaten te bestrijden.

([1]) PB L 263 van 7.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003601/13
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Accident statistics and uninsured vehicles

On 19 March 2013, the Commission published new figures on the number of road deaths in the EU. The statistics show that the number of road deaths fell by 9% in 2012. Last year, there were fewer road deaths in the EU than at any time since records began. We are thus on course to halve the number of road deaths by 2020, as laid down in the EU Road safety action programme 2011-2020.

Under Directive 2005/14/EC all vehicles in the EU must have insurance against civil liability before use in traffic. It appears, however, that more and more people are driving on the roads without the relevant insurance.

1. Does the Commission have in its possession figures relating to the number of uninsured cars involved in accidents over recent years in each Member State? If so, could the Commission please provide these?

2. How many deaths occurred in accidents involving an uninsured car in 2012 and/or preceding years?

3. What action is the Commission taking to reduce the number of uninsured cars in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission has no exact figures on the number of uninsured cars involved in road traffic accidents. Neither has it figures on the number of uninsured cars which cause deadly accidents. National authorities should have this data.

The Commission fully agrees that it is essential to combat uninsured driving. According to the EU Motor Insurance Directive 2009/103/EC ([1]), Member States shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that all motor vehicles in the EU are covered by civil liability insurance.

In addition, the Commission follows closely any developments at the national level by, for example, regularly asking the Member States to provide their estimates of uninsured driving. This exercise was last done in July 2010.

The Commission is also cooperating actively with insurers' and claims handlers' associations at the EU level, promoting best practices in order to combat uninsured driving in the Member States.

([1]) OJ L 263, 7.10.2009.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003602/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: Gezondheidstoestanden Europeanen

Woensdag 27 maart is er een onderzoek gepubliceerd naar de gezondheidstoestand van Europeanen in het wetenschappelijk tijdschrift The Lancet. Daaruit blijkt dat de bezuinigingen die in Europese landen in de crisis worden doorgevoerd dramatische uitwerking hebben op de volksgezondheid. Een van de officiële verplichtingen van de Europese Commissie is de uitwerking van beleid op de gezondheid na te gaan.

— Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het onderzoek „Financial crisis, austerity, and health in Europe"? En zo ja wat vindt de Commissie van dit onderzoek?

— Deelt de Commissie de conclusie van het onderzoek dat de bezuinigingen die in Europese landen in de crisis worden doorgevoerd dramatische uitwerking hebben op de volksgezondheid? En zo ja wat is de Commissie van plan te doen met deze resultaten van het onderzoek?

— Op welke wijze toetst de Commissie de uitwerking van beleid op de gezondheidstoestand van Europeanen? En hoe vaak is dat de afgelopen jaren gebeurd?

— Welk beleid is naar aanleiding van negatieve conclusies op de volksgezondheidstoestand van Europeanen de afgelopen jaren aangepast?

— Kijkt de Commissie ook specifiek naar de effecten van bezuinigingen tijdens de crisis in lidstaten op de langdurige ouderenzorg?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(28 mei 2013)

De Commissie is het eens met de conclusie van het artikel dat de volledige omvang van de gevolgen in zwaar getroffen landen pas over een aantal jaren bekend zal worden. Er zijn te weinig gegevens beschikbaar over de gevolgen van de crisis voor de gezondheid, wat een complex fenomeen is om te meten: er zijn directe gevolgen, zoals in het geval van mensen die depressief worden nadat zij uit hun huis zijn gezet; daarnaast zijn er ook indirecte gevolgen, zoals toenemende gezondheidsproblemen als gevolg van de verminderde toegang tot zorg. Bovendien worden bepaalde symptomen van slechtere gezondheid pas op langere termijn zichtbaar en kunnen er dan pas gegevens over worden verzameld.

De Commissie deelt echter niet het standpunt dat de Commissie wettelijk verplicht is voorafgaande beoordelingen van de gezondheidseffecten uit te voeren voor hervormingen van de gezondheidsstelsels van de lidstaten. Alvorens met initiatieven op EU-niveau te komen, analyseert de Commissie de mogelijke gevolgen daarvan door middel van effectbeoordelingen, waarin ook de gezondheidseffecten worden beoordeeld ([1]). Uit een evaluatie van de EU-gezondheidsstrategie bleek dat 40 % van deze effectbeoordelingen gezondheidseffecten omvatte. Er is echter geen overzicht van de invloed van gezondheidseffectbeoordelingen op de beleidsopties die door de Commissie in overweging worden genomen.

De Commissie zal blijven adviseren dat bij het streven naar hervormingen rekening moet worden gehouden met rechtvaardigheidsoverwegingen om de universele toegang tot gezondheidszorg te garanderen en de kwetsbaarste groepen te beschermen. De Commissie zal de situatie nauwlettend blijven volgen en heeft opdracht gegeven tot een studie van alle rapporten en gegevens over de gezondheidseffecten van de crisis.

Wat de situatie van ouderen betreft, heeft het Comité voor sociale bescherming van de EU een werkgroep opgericht die zich bezighoudt met het verstrekken van geschikte langdurige zorg in een vergrijzende samenleving en onder krappe overheidsbegrotingen. Begin 2014 komt hierover een verslag uit.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/commission_guidelines_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003602/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: The health of Europeans

On Wednesday 27 March, the scientific journal *The Lancet* published a study into the health of Europeans. The study shows that the cuts implemented in European countries during the crisis have dramatic consequences for public health. One of the European Commission's official duties is to monitor the impact of policy on the health of citizens.

— Is the Commission aware of the study 'Financial crisis, austerity, and health in Europe'? If so, what is the Commission's view of the study?

— Does the Commission share the study's conclusion that the cuts implemented in European countries during the crisis have dramatic consequences for public health? If so, what action does the Commission plan to take with regard to the results of the study?

— How does the Commission check the impact of policy on the health of European citizens? How often has it done so in recent years?

— What items of policy have been adjusted in view of the negative consequences that they would have on the health of European citizens in recent years?

— Is the Commission also looking, specifically, into the effects on the long-term care of the elderly of cuts during the crisis in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission agrees with the article's conclusion that 'the full scale of consequences in severely affected countries will become apparent only in several years'. There is a lack of comprehensive data on the impact of the crisis on health, which is a complex phenomenon to measure: there are direct effects, e.g., people suffer depression due to eviction from their homes; and there are indirect effects e.g. health problems may increase due to reduced access to care. There are also time lags in terms of the time needed for symptoms of 'worse health' to appear and for corresponding data to be collected.

The Commission does not however agree with the view that it is the Commission's legal obligation to conduct *ex-ante* health impact assessments for health system reforms by the Member States. Before proposing EU-wide initiatives, the Commission analyses their potential impact in impact assessments, which include an assessment of health impacts. ([1]) An evaluation of the EU Health Strategy found that 40% of such Impact Assessments include health impacts. There is, however, no overview of how health impact assessments altered policy options considered by the Commission.

The Commission will continue to advise that, when pursuing reforms, equity considerations are taken into account to safeguard universal access to healthcare and sparing the more vulnerable. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation closely, and has commissioned a review of all reports and data on the health impact of the crisis.

With regard to the situation of older people, the EU's Social Protection Committee has established a working group to focus on the provision of adequate long-term care in ageing societies and under tight public budgets. A report is due to be adopted in early 2014.

([1]) Available from http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/commission_guidelines_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003603/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: BRICS — Criação de banco para países emergentes

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo canal televisivo português TVI24, os maiores países emergentes (BRICS) chegaram recentemente a um acordo para a criação de um banco de desenvolvimento comum destinado a financiar projetos de infraestruturas.

Os BRICS (Brasil, Rússia, Índia, China e África do Sul) pretendem criar uma instituição semelhante ao Banco Mundial para financiamento aos países emergentes.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento da intenção anunciada?

2. Como a avalia a Comissão?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão está consciente da intenção dos países BRICS de criar um banco de desenvolvimento. Os BRICS lançaram a ideia durante a sua cimeira de 2012, tendo chegado a um acordo na sua última Cimeira (26-27 de março de 2013, em Durban).

2. As economias emergentes, nomeadamente os BRICS, estão a tornar-se atores importantes nos países em desenvolvimento e desempenham um papel cada vez mais importante na configuração do seu programa de desenvolvimento. Este facto cria importantes oportunidades de desenvolvimento. A Comissão congratula-se com o aumento da contribuição dos BRICS para o desenvolvimento internacional e apoia uma relação de cooperação entre doadores tradicionais e emergentes em apoio ao desenvolvimento.

Nesta fase, não é fácil avaliar o valor acrescentado desta nova iniciativa, uma vez que muitas questões relativas ao funcionamento do futuro banco ainda se encontram em aberto. Os países BRICS terão de determinar as regras operacionais, a estrutura de gestão e a localização da sede do banco de desenvolvimento do BRICS. A contribuição inicial deverá ser «substancial e suficiente para ser eficaz, em termos de financiamento de infraestruturas», mas a quantia ainda não foi decidida. Além disso, não foi alcançado um compromisso relativo ao calendário. Apesar de ser necessário mais algum tempo para que o novo banco de desenvolvimento esteja totalmente operacional, deverá haver um entendimento claro desde o início que o seu papel deve ser complementar ao papel das instituições financeiras existentes. A Comissão está a seguir de perto os diálogos em curso e a evolução da situação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003603/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: BRICS — creation of a bank for emerging countries

According to a report on the Portuguese television channel TVI24, the largest emerging countries (BRICS) recently came to an agreement on the creation of a joint development bank for financing infrastructure projects.

The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) intend to create a financial institution like the World Bank, for emerging countries.

1. Is the Commission aware of the announced intention?

2. What is the Commission's view of it?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the BRICS countries' intention to establish a development bank. The BRICS launched the idea at their 2012 summit and agreed on the establishment at their latest summit (26-27 March 2013, Durban).

2. Emerging economies, notably the BRICS, are becoming major players in developing countries and are playing an increasingly important role in shaping the global development agenda. This creates important development opportunities. The Commission welcomes the increasing contribution of BRICS to international development and supports a cooperative relationship between traditional and emerging donors in providing support for development.

At this stage it is not easy to assess the value added of this new initiative, since many issues regarding the functioning of the future bank are still open. The BRICS countries will have to determine the operating rules, the managing structure and the location of the headquarters of the BRICS development bank. The initial contribution is foreseen to be 'substantial and sufficient to be effective in financing infrastructure', but the amount still has to be decided on. Furthermore, no commitment on a timeline was reached. While it would take some time before the new development bank becomes fully operational, there should be a clear understanding from the beginning that its role should be complementary to the role of the existing financial institutions. The Commission is following the ongoing discussions and further developments closely.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003604/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Vinho tinto — Novas propriedades terapêuticas

Um estudo da Universidade de Harvard prova que um composto do vinho tinto — o resveratrol — protege o ser humano, retardando as doenças da velhice. Este composto age estimulando uma proteína, a SIRT1, que protege o organismo de doenças ligadas ao envelhecimento, como o cancro, a Alzheimer e a diabetes.

Este estudo revelou ainda que o resveratrol estimula diretamente a SIRT1, ativando esta proteína em presença de moléculas naturalmente produzidas pelas células vivas.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento do referido estudo?

2. Como o avalia a Comissão?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

O consumo nocivo de álcool constitui um grave problema de saúde pública na UE. É responsável por cerca de 7 % das doenças e mortes precoces e um fator de risco em mais de 60 doenças, bem como de acidentes e lesões. Constitui também um fator que contribui para a violência entre as pessoas.

A Comissão tem conhecimento de que há estudos que indicam que um consumo de álcool ligeiro a moderado tem um efeito protetor no caso das doenças isquémicas. No entanto, a nível da população, este efeito positivo é superado pelos efeitos negativos na saúde. Além disso, não existe um efeito de proteção para os mais jovens, para os quais qualquer dose de álcool aumenta o risco de acidentes isquémicos.

O financiamento da investigação para identificar e compreender o papel dos compostos bioativos nos géneros alimentícios tem sido uma das prioridades da investigação apoiada pela UE através de vários Programas-Quadro (PQ). Cerca de 150 milhões de euros foram investidos neste domínio ao longo do sexto e sétimo Programas-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (6.° PQ, 2002-2006 e 7.° PQ, 2007-2013). Horizonte 2020, o próximo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico da UE, continuará a explorar alimentos e regimes alimentares como os principais fatores para a promoção e a manutenção da saúde e para a prevenção de doenças.

Sobre os efeitos positivos do resveratrol no vinho tinto foram financiados dois projetos: Anticancer RES METAB (contribuição da UE: 40 000 euros) ([1])e Resveratrol ROLES (contribuição da UE: 100 000 euros) ([2]). Dados pormenorizados sobre estes dois projetos já foram fornecidos na resposta à pergunta escrita E-002888/2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/85262_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/97249_en.html
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003604/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Red wine — new therapeutic properties

A Harvard University study proves that a compound in red wine — resveratrol — protects human health, inhibiting the diseases of old age. This compound acts by stimulating a protein — SIRT1 — which protects the body from age-related diseases, such as cancer, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes.

This study has also shown that resveratrol directly stimulates SIRT1, activating this protein in the presence of molecules naturally produced by living cells.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. What is the Commission's view of it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Harmful alcohol consumption is a major public health concern in the EU. It is accountable for over 7% of all ill health and early deaths and is a risk factor for more than 60 diseases as well as for accidents and injuries. It is also a contributing factor to interpersonal violence.

The Commission is aware that there are studies indicating that light to moderate drinking has a protective effect on ischaemic diseases. However, at population level this positive effect is outweighed by the negative health effects. In addition, no such protective effect exists for younger people, for whom any dose of alcohol increases the risk of ischaemic events.

Funding research to identify and understand the role of bioactive compounds in foods has been one of the priorities of the EU-supported research through several Framework Programmes (FPs). Approximately EUR 150 million have been invested in this field throughout the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006 and FP7, 2007-2013). Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, will continue to explore food and diet as the main factors for promoting and sustaining health and for preventing diseases.

Concerning the positive effects of resveratrol in red wine, two projects have been funded: ANTICANCER RES METAB (EU contribution: EUR 40 000) ([1]) and RESVERATROL ROLES (EU contribution: EUR 100 000) ([2]). Details about these two projects have already been provided in the answer to Written Question E-002888/2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/85262_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/97249_en.html
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003605/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Idosos em situação de risco

Considerando que:

— Um estudo efetuado em Portugal, durante o ano de 2012, revelou que dois em cada três idosos que vivem em lares têm um rendimento inferior à mensalidade da instituição;

— O inquérito revela ainda que 17 % dos lares não cumprem com as atividades prometidas, 17 % apresentam custos inesperados no final do mês, e 12 % reportam o aumento inesperado da mensalidade, numa altura em que «os orçamentos familiares estão com elasticidade zero», de acordo com as declarações do responsável por este estudo;

— Esta situação tem tendência para agravar-se, porque há um desfasamento entre a procura e a oferta de lares de idosos. Segundo o INE, em 2050, um terço da população portuguesa será idosa. Atualmente, de acordo com os censos 2011, os indivíduos com mais de 65 anos representam já cerca de 20 % da população.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais os dados de que dispõe relativamente aos restantes países da UE?

Que resposta poderá a Comissão apresentar no sentido de contribuir para um maior envolvimento na resolução desta problemática?

Quais os mecanismos que poderão ser utilizados a nível da UE para desenvolver estruturas próprias de apoio aos idosos?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia não está a recolher informações sobre a situação dos rendimentos de pessoas que vivem em instituições, nem sobre as mensalidades a pagar pelos cuidados dispensados nos lares de idosos.

A prestação de cuidados de saúde prolongados é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. Não obstante, os Estados-Membros acordaram objetivos comuns relativos à acessibilidade, à qualidade e à sustentabilidade financeira dos sistemas de cuidados prolongados no quadro da sua cooperação no âmbito do Comité da Proteção Social ([1]). A Comissão apoia os Estados-Membros nos esforços envidados neste domínio, tendo recentemente cofinanciado dois projetos em conjunto com a OCDE, que analisou o financiamento e a qualidade dos cuidados de saúde prolongados, bem como a situação das pessoas que os prestam ([2]).

O pacote de investimento social, adotado em fevereiro de 2013, inclui um documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão sobre os cuidados de saúde prolongados ([3]). A Comissão apoia atualmente o Comité da Proteção Social na elaboração de um relatório sobre os cuidados de saúde prolongados. Este explorará os meios que permitam evitar a perda de autonomia, assim como as formas de poder manter ou restituir às pessoas idosas a capacidade de viverem de forma independente.

A Comissão está igualmente a trabalhar com as partes interessadas portuguesas no âmbito da Parceria de Inovação Europeia para um Envelhecimento Ativo e Saudável, com vista à aplicação de planos de ação em matéria de prevenção e de diagnóstico precoce, de cuidados e curas de saúde e de autonomia de vida e envelhecimento ativo. Várias iniciativas estão a ser levadas a cabo pela região de Coimbra e pelas universidades do Minho, de Coimbra, de Lisboa e do Porto.

([1]) O CPS serve de meio para o intercâmbio e a cooperação entre os Estados-Membros e a Comissão Europeia no quadro do método aberto de coordenação aplicado à inclusão social, aos cuidados de saúde e aos cuidados de saúde prolongados, bem como às pensões.
([2]) O relatório sobre a qualidade dos cuidados de saúde prolongados será publicado em junho de 2013. http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/helpwantedprovidingandpayingforlong-termcare.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en

Os FEIE ([4]) podem apoiar a mudança para os cuidados de proximidade, criando-se assim as condições necessárias para uma vida autónoma das pessoas idosas. O projeto de regulamento para o período de 2014-2020 identifica várias medidas destinadas à constituição de serviços de cuidados de saúde de proximidade (nomeadamente, a prioridade em termos de investimento no contexto do objetivo temático 9 do Regulamento FEDER).

([4]) Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003605/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Elderly people at risk

— A study conducted in Portugal in 2012 has revealed that two out of every three elderly people living in care homes have a monthly income lower than the home's fees.

— The study also shows that 17% of homes do not carry out all the activities promised, 17% add unexpected charges at the end of the month, and 12% increase their monthly rates without warning, at a time when household budgets cannot stretch any further, according to the body that produced the study.

— This situation is set to get worse because demand for care home places is out of step with supply. According to Statistics Portugal one third of the Portuguese population will be classified as elderly in 2050. Currently, according to the 2011 census, individuals aged over 65 already account for around 20% of the population.

What figures does the Commission have for the other Member States?

What action will the Commission be able to take in response in order to be more involved in solving this problem?

What EU-level mechanisms can be used to develop structures for supporting elderly people?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The European Commission is not collecting information on the income situation of persons living in institutions neither on the fees to be paid for care in residential homes.

Long-term care provision is a responsibility of Member States. These have, however, agreed common objectives on the accessibility, quality and financial sustainability of long-term care in the context of their cooperation in the Social Protection Committee ([1]). The Commission supports Member States in their efforts and has recently co-financed two projects with OECD which looked into the financing and quality of long-term care as well as into the situation of carers ([2]).

The Social Investment Package adopted in February 2013 includes a Commission Staff Working Document on long-term care ([3]). The Commission is currently supporting the Social Protection Committee in preparing a report on long-term care. It will explore how the loss of autonomy can be prevented and how the capacity of older people to live independently can be preserved or restored.

The Commission is also working with Portuguese stakeholders under the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing to implement action plans on prevention and early diagnosis, care and cure and independent living and active ageing. Several actions are being implemented by the region of Coimbra and the universities of Minho, Coimbra, Lisboa and Porto.

The ESIF ([4]) may support the shift to community-based care, providing the necessary conditions for independent living for elderly people. The draft regulation for 2014-2020 identifies several measures for building community based services (i.e. the investment priority under thematic objective 9 of the ERDF regulation).

([1]) The SPC serves as a vehicle for cooperative exchange between Member States and the European Commission in the framework of the Open Method of Coordination on social inclusion, healthcare and long-term care as well as pensions.
([2]) http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/helpwantedprovidingandpayingforlong-termcare.htm The report on quality in long-term care will be published in June 2013.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([4]) European Structural and Investment Funds.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003606/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Anorexia — novo tratamento

Considerando que:

— A anorexia nervosa é uma doença crónica que afeta cerca de um por cento das pessoas em todo o mundo. Geralmente é diagnosticada em mulheres jovens, com idades entre os 15 e os 19 anos;

— Um grupo de cientistas norte-americanos e canadianos desenvolveu uma nova técnica para tratar a anorexia, que consiste em usar elétrodos implantados no cérebro, tendo obtido resultados muito promissores.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta nova forma de tratamento?

— Considera que poderá ser um avanço importante no tratamento das doenças e distúrbios alimentares?

Resposta dada por Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do estudo de investigadores norte-americanos e canadianos, publicado no passado mês de março na revista de Medicina «Lancet», sobre a estimulação profunda do cérebro para o tratamento da anorexia.

No entanto, este tratamento foi aplicado a um número reduzido de doentes, encontra-se ainda numa fase experimental e induziu melhorias apenas em alguns dos doentes.

Embora este estudo específico não tenha sido apoiado por fundos provenientes do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), este programa investiu, desde 2007, 283 milhões de euros em investigação sobre doenças neuropsiquiátricas, incluindo cerca de 9 milhões de euros em investigação sobre distúrbios alimentares. Esses projetos apoiados abrangem aspetos da relação entre os genes e o ambiente, imagiologia, neurobiologia, alimentação, aspetos comportamentais e ligações com a dependência. Em especial, o projeto Neurofast ([1]) estuda a neurobiologia da dependência e o comportamento alimentar e as forças sociopsicológicas complexas que podem levar à sua desregulação.

Por último, convém notar que maio de 2013 foi declarado o Mês Europeu do Cérebro ([2]), havendo vários eventos organizados pela Comissão e pelas partes interessadas para dar a conhecer a investigação sobre o cérebro e as questões da saúde.

([1]) http://www.neurofast.eu/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003606/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: New treatment for anorexia

Anorexia nervosa is a chronic disorder that affects around 1% of the world's population. It is generally diagnosed in young women, aged 15 to 19.

A group of US and Canadian scientists have developed a new technique for treating anorexia which consists of using electrodes implanted in the brain. This has produced very promising results.

— Is the Commission aware of this new form of treatment?

— Does it believe that this could be an important step forward in the treatment of eating-related illnesses and disorders?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the study published last March by US and Canadian researchers in the medical journal *Lancet* on deep brain stimulation for the treatment of anorexia.

However, this treatment was performed on a limited number of patients, and is still in an experimental phase and led to improvement for some of the patients only.

Although this specific study was not supported by funds coming from the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), FP7 invested since 2007 EUR 283 million for research on neuropsychiatric disorders, including about EUR 9 million for research on eating disorders. Those supported projects cover gene-environment aspects, imaging, neurobiology, food intake, behavioural aspects and links to addiction. In particular, the project NEUROFAST ([1]) explores the neurobiology of addiction and eating behaviour and the complex socio-psychological forces that can lead to its dysregulation.

Finally, it has to be noted that May 2013 is declared European Month of the Brain ([2]), with several events organised by the Commission and by stakeholders to raise awareness about brain research and healthcare issues.

([1]) http://www.neurofast.eu/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003607/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Bebe infetado com o VIH/SIDA

Considerando que foi recentemente anunciada, por um grupo de médicos norte-americanos, a cura de um bebe infetado com o vírus da SIDA e que este foi o primeiro caso de uma «cura funcional» de uma criança contaminada à nascença com o VIH, pergunto à Comissão que análise faz deste anúncio.

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do estudo apresentado na Conferência sobre Retrovírus e Infeções Oportunistas, realizada em março em Atlanta, no qual a Dr.ª Persaud da Universidade Johns Hopkins relata a cura de uma criança seropositiva de 26 meses, sujeita a uma terapêutica antirretrovírica padrão a partir das 30 horas de vida.

Os investigadores, que apresentaram um estudo bem documentado relativo à «cura funcional» de uma criança seropositiva, aventaram que uma terapêutica antirretrovírica padrão muito precoce poderia prevenir a criação de um reservatório latente e que, por conseguinte, seria possível vir a curar crianças.

Estas conclusões são suscetíveis de conduzir a uma alteração das práticas de tratamento atuais dos recém-nascidos infetados pelo VIH. Atualmente, estão a ser elaborados ensaios clínicos destinados a investigar se é ou não possível obter a «cura funcional» de outros lactentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003607/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: HIV/AIDS-infected baby

A group of US doctors recently announced that they had cured a baby infected with the AIDS virus and that this was the first case of a 'functional cure' in a child who had contracted HIV at birth. What is the Commission's view of this announcement?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the study presented at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections held in March in Atlanta, where Dr Persaud from Johns Hopkins University reported a case of HIV cure in a 26-month-old infected child who initiated standard Anti-Retroviral Therapy at 30 hours of age.

The researchers report a well-documented case of functional cure in an HIV positive child and suggested that very early standard Anti-Retroviral Therapy may prevent the establishment of a latent reservoir and therefore that cure in children could be potentially achieved.

This might lead to a change in current treatment practices in HIV-infected new-borns. Clinical trials to investigate whether or not a functional cure is possible involving other infants are now under development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003608/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Comida de bebé com pesticidas

Considerando o seguinte:

— Segundo um relatório da Autoridade Europeia de Segurança Alimentar, que apresenta os resultados do controlo de resíduos de pesticidas em alimentos nos 27 Estados-Membros da UE e que foi revelado recentemente, no que se refere à comida para bebé, os níveis máximos de resíduos de pesticidas foram ultrapassados em 36 das cerca de 1 800 amostras analisadas;

— Foi encontrada comida para bebé que violava o limite permitido de resíduos de pesticidas em Portugal, em Espanha, na Alemanha, na Hungria e na Eslováquia; Portugal é também um dos seis países nos quais há amostras de alimentos analisadas em laboratórios não acreditados;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Não considera estar em causa um problema de saúde pública?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

Os níveis máximos de pesticidas em alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças jovens são fixados no limite de quantificação de 0,01 mg/kg, ou até menos, no caso de alguns pesticidas. Quer isto dizer que os alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças jovens têm de cumprir regras muito mais rigorosas do que os alimentos para a população em geral. Embora o relatório de acompanhamento de 2010, elaborado pela Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA), tenha identificado casos em que os limites máximos de resíduos foram ultrapassados, isso não significa, porém, que haja ou tenha havido riscos para a saúde de lactentes ou crianças jovens.

No entanto, a Comissão dará seguimento às conclusões do relatório, junto dos produtores de alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças jovens, para assegurar que a origem das matérias-primas é cuidadosamente verificada, de modo a garantir que estas não implicam a superação dos limites máximos de resíduos estabelecidos na legislação da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003608/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Baby food containing pesticides

According to a recently published report by the European Food Safety Authority presenting the results of tests for pesticides in foodstuffs in the 27 Member States, in the case of baby food, the maximum trace levels of pesticide were exceeded in 36 of the 1 800 samples analysed.

Baby food exceeding the acceptable limit for pesticide residues was found in Portugal, Spain, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia. Portugal is also one of six countries in which food samples were tested in non-accredited laboratories.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Dose it believe that this a public health problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Maximum levels for pesticides in food intended for infants and young children are set at the limit of quantification at 0.01 mg/kg or even lower for some pesticides. This means that food intended for infants and young children has to comply with much stricter rules than food for the general population. While exceedances of the maximum residue limits have been identified in the EFSA monitoring report 2010, this does however not mean that there is or has been a health risk to infants or young children.

Nevertheless, the Commission will follow up on the findings with producers of food intended for infants and young children to ensure that raw products are carefully sourced so as to guarantee that they do not lead to exceedances of the maximum residue levels set in EU legislation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003609/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Fukushima — falhas no arrefecimento de combustível

Considerando que:

— A central de Fukushima tem seis reatores, quatro dos quais foram já protagonistas de um grave acidente nuclear nos dias seguintes ao sismo e tsunami que abalaram o Japão em 2011. Nessa altura, houve duas explosões, fusão de combustível nuclear e libertação de radioatividade.

— Esta segunda-feira, os sistemas de arrefecimento de combustível em três reatores da central nuclear de Fukushima ficaram paralisados por uma falha de energia.

— Sem o sistema de arrefecimento, as piscinas podem entrar em ebulição, reduzindo o nível da água e eventualmente expondo o combustível à interação com o ar — tal como aconteceu em 2011.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia esta situação?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

Tal como confirmado pela TEPCO, a empresa responsável pela central nuclear de Fukushima, houve uma falha de energia em 18 de março de 2013. Este problema causou um corte de energia e afetou sistemas de arrefecimento fundamentais das piscinas de armazenagem de combustível irradiado da central nuclear. De acordo com a autoridade reguladora japonesa no domínio da segurança nuclear, este corte de energia causou a fuga de água bombeada para as piscinas de armazenagem de combustível irradiado das unidades 1, 3 e 4 da central nuclear. Não afetou a injeção de água nas unidades 1 a 3 que tinham sofrido fusões do núcleo após o sismo e o tsunami de março de 2011. Segundo a TEPCO, seriam precisos quatro dias sem água bombeada para que a temperatura nas piscinas atingisse os limites de segurança. Neste incidente, a energia foi restabelecida em todas as piscinas de armazenagem de combustível irradiado em 29 horas.

A TEPCO concluiu que os cortes de energia se deveram a um curto-circuito causado pela presença de um rato nos terminais sob tensão. Os investigadores não detetaram qualquer anomalia nos outros quadros elétricos. Para evitar uma reincidência, a TEPCO anunciou que alguns dispositivos principais tinham sido desligados do quadro temporário, instalado após o acidente de março de 2011. Esses dispositivos permanecem no exterior e foram ligados a quadros no interior, à prova de ratos. Uma outra perda de energia ocorreu em 5 de abril de 2013. Foi alegadamente causada por trabalhadores que instalavam uma malha de proteção em torno de um quadro de distribuição de energia elétrica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003609/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Fukushima — fuel cooling system failures

— The Fukushima power plant has six reactors, four of which played a central role in the serious nuclear accident in the days following the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011. At that time, there were two explosions, there was fusion of nuclear fuel and there was a radiation leak.

— This Monday, the fuel cooling systems in three of the reactors at Fukushima nuclear power plant were paralysed by a power cut.

— Without the cooling system, the pools could start to boil, reducing their water levels and potentially exposing the fuel to reaction with the air, as happened in 2011.

What is the Commission's view of this situation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

As confirmed by TEPCO, the utility company responsible for the Fukushima nuclear power plant (NPP), a problem with electric power occurred on 18 March 2013. This problem caused a blackout and affected critical cooling systems at the NPP's spent fuel storage pools. According to the Japanese Nuclear Safety Regulator, this blackout caused the leakage of pumped water to the spent fuel storage pools at Units 1, 3 and 4 of the NPP. It did not affect water injection to Units 1 to 3 that had suffered core meltdowns after the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. According to TEPCO, it would take four days without pumped water before the temperature in the pools reached safety limits. In the present incident, power was restored to all spent fuel pools after 29 hours.

TEPCO concluded that the blackout was due to a short-circuit caused by a rat climbing across live terminals. The investigators found no anomalies in the other switchboards. To prevent a recurrence, TEPCO announced that key devices had been disconnected from the temporary switchboard, installed after the accident of March 2011. These key devices remain outdoors and were reconnected to rat-proof, indoor switchboards. A further loss of power occurred on 5 April 2013. It was reportedly caused by workmen who were putting up a protective mesh around a power distribution switchboard.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003610/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Leucemia — nova terapia experimental

Considerando que:

— um estudo norte-americano, publicado recentemente, revelou que uma nova terapia experimental, utilizada no combate à leucemia linfoide aguda, foi capaz de conseguir fazer o cancro entrar em remissão em doentes adultos;

— este tipo de cancro é muitas vezes resistente à quimioterapia e pode matar em apenas semanas;

— segundo os investigadores responsáveis pelo estudo, a nova terapia tem «potencial para salvar vidas»;

como avalia a Comissão esta descoberta?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos esforços recentes para combater a leucemia linfoide aguda, mencionados pelo Senhor Deputado ([1]) ([2]).

A investigação no domínio de abordagens de tratamento orientado aplicáveis a vários subtipos de leucemia, incluindo a leucemia linfoide aguda, obteve financiamento dos Sexto e Sétimo Programas-Quadro de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (PQ6, 2002-2006; PQ7, 2007-2013).

Até agora foram atribuídos 36,5 milhões de EUR para investigação de fronteira e translacional para a compreensão, o diagnóstico e o tratamento da leucemia. Os domínios abrangidos incluem, nomeadamente, as interações entre as células leucémicas e a medula óssea (Lscmicroenv ([3])), o transplante de células estaminais, os marcadores biológicos e a descoberta de medicamentos (Epitron ([4]), Moltall ([5])), a resistência aos medicamentos e os mecanismos de sinalização leucemogénicos (HEM_ID ([6])) e os ensaios clínicos integrados para melhorar as terapias da leucemia (EUROPEAN Leukemianet ([7]), Intreall ([8])).

A proposta da Comissão relativa ao Horizonte 2020 — Programa-Quadro de Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) proporcionará oportunidades de investigação no domínio das abordagens de tratamento do cancro no âmbito do desafio societal «Saúde, alterações demográficas e bem-estar» e do objetivo «Liderança em Tecnologias Facilitadoras e Industriais» da prioridade «Liderança Industrial». Ainda é cedo para determinar quais os domínios específicos de investigação que poderão ser abrangidos.

([1]) http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/03/21/immune-system-therapy-shows-promise-in-adults-with-leukemia/
([2]) Brentjens et al (2013) Sci Transl Med. 2013 Mar 20;5(177):177ra38.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12587860
([4]) http://www.epitron.eu/
([5]) http://www.openaire.eu/it/component/openaire/project_info/default/201?id=205252
([6]) http://www.hemid.eu/
([7]) http://www.leukemia-net.org/
([8]) http://www.intreall-fp7.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003610/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Leukaemia — new experimental treatment

According to a recently published US study, a new experimental treatment used to combat acute lymphocytic leukaemia has been able to send the cancer into remission in adult patients.

This type of cancer is often chemotherapy-resistant and can kill in just weeks.

According to the researchers who conducted the study, the new treatment has the potential to save lives.

What is the Commission's view of this discovery?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of recent efforts undertaken on the alleviation of acute lymphocytic leukaemia (ALL) as mentioned by the Honourable Member ([1]) ([2]).

Research on targeted therapeutic approaches for various leukaemia subtypes, including acute lymphocytic leukaemia, has been funded across the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013).

So far, EUR 36.5 million has been devoted to frontier and translational research on the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of leukaemia. Areas addressed include for instance interactions between leukaemia cells and the bone marrow (LSCMICROENV ([3])), stem cell transplantation, biomarker and drug discovery (EPITRON ([4]), MOLTALL ([5])), drug resistance and leukemogenic signalling mechanisms (HEM_ID ([6])) and integrated clinical trials to improve leukaemia therapies (EUROPEAN LEUKEMIANET ([7]), INTREALL ([8])).

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), will offer opportunities for research on cancer therapeutic approaches through the 'Health, Demographic Change and Well-being' societal challenge and the 'Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies' objective of the pillar 'Industrial leadership'. It is yet premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

([1]) http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/03/21/immune-system-therapy-shows-promise-in-adults-with-leukemia/
([2]) Brentjens et al (2013) Sci Transl Med. 2013 Mar 20;5(177):177ra38
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12587860
([4]) http://www.epitron.eu/
([5]) http://www.openaire.eu/it/component/openaire/project_info/default/201?id=205252
([6]) http://www.hemid.eu/
([7]) http://www.leukemia-net.org/
([8]) http://www.intreall-fp7.eu/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003612/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Novo modelo de resgate aplicado em Chipre

Considerando o seguinte:

Com a aprovação do programa de resgate a Chipre, a zona euro e o FMI inauguraram um novo modelo de salvamento dos bancos em risco de falência. Neste caso, não serão os contribuintes a pagar a fatura dos problemas dos bancos, como tem acontecido até agora, mas os acionistas, os detentores de obrigações e os grandes depositantes.

Pergunta-se:

Está a Comissão em condições de garantir que este modelo não será replicado noutros países, nomeadamente nos já intervencionados, como Portugal?

Está a Comissão em condições de garantir que este novo modelo só foi aplicado em Chipre pelo facto de se considerar que o seu setor financeiro estava sobredimensionado e por existirem suspeitas do mesmo funcionar como uma «lavandaria» de dinheiro dos oligarcas Russos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de maio de 2013)

Chipre é um caso único devido à dimensão do seu setor bancário, conjugado com a sua estrutura, nível de assunção de riscos e supervisão insuficiente. As medidas adotadas são adaptadas à situação absolutamente excecional de Chipre, tendo em vista a restabelecer a viabilidade do setor bancário, protegendo, ao mesmo tempo, todos os depósitos até 100 000 euros em conformidade com os princípios da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003612/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: New bailout model applied in Cyprus

With the approval of the bailout programme for Cyprus, the euro area and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have introduced a new model for saving banks at risk of collapse. In this case, it will not be the taxpayer who foots the bill for the banks' problems, as has been the case up to now, but shareholders, bondholders and major depositors.

Can the Commission guarantee that this model will not be applied in other countries, specifically those where there is already a bailout programme in force, such as Portugal?

Can the Commission guarantee that this new model has only been applied in Cyprus because its financial sector was considered bloated and because of suspicions of money laundering by Russian oligarchs?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003614/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Renegociação da dívida pública portuguesa II

Em Portugal, o anúncio de que o défice das contas públicas continuará acima dos 6 % e de que a dívida pública ultrapassa já 122 % do PIB é bem demonstrativo dos efeitos altamente recessivos da aplicação do programa UE-FMI. Comprova-se, assim, que a consolidação das contas públicas e a redução da dívida pública têm de ser obtidas com o crescimento económico e não se alcançarão com uma política altamente recessiva. Esta evidência é reforçada pelos dados relativos à execução orçamental dos dois primeiros meses do ano, que permitem constatar já um claro desvio entre as previsões de evolução da receita e da despesa inseridas no Orçamento para 2013 e a execução verificada em janeiro e fevereiro. Estes dados vêm igualmente pôr em causa a posição da Comissão Europeia, expressa na resposta à pergunta E-009603/2012, segundo a qual «a dívida pública permanece sustentável» e a aplicação do programa FMI-UE é um «êxito».

A gravidade da situação atual impõe uma alternativa ao programa FMI-UE. Uma alternativa que passa por encetar uma renegociação da dívida pública. Esta opção não é original — recorde-se o processo desenvolvido pela Alemanha há seis décadas, que indexou o serviço da dívida contraída no quadro da Segunda Guerra Mundial a um valor de 5 % sobre as exportações — e adequa-se à realidade portuguesa.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Terá a Comissão Europeia, em algum momento, considerado a possibilidade de implementação de uma solução idêntica à encontrada para a Alemanha, cuja indexação do serviço da dívida a uma determinada percentagem sobre as exportações permitiu torná-lo compatível com o crescimento económico? Se não o fez, qual o motivo?

2. Perante as novas evidências (supramencionadas) do falhanço dos pressupostos e das previsões associadas ao programa FMI-UE, estará a Comissão disponível para, juntamente com o BCE e o FMI, iniciar um processo de renegociação da dívida pública portuguesa com base nos princípios enunciados na pergunta E-009603/2012?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

Tal como referido na resposta à pergunta E-009603/2012 ([1]), a Comissão efetua uma análise aprofundada da sustentabilidade da dívida no âmbito de cada avaliação trimestral do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal. Esta análise mostra que, embora o rácio da dívida de Portugal seja muito elevado ([2]), a dívida pública permanece sustentável no quadro das políticas previstas no programa.

Tal como foi apontado no sexto relatório de revisão ([3]), as condições de empréstimo a Portugal são muito favoráveis. Por outro lado, em 12 de abril de 2013, o Conselho (Ecofin) e o Eurogrupo acordaram em prolongar os prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos do MEEF e do FEEF à Irlanda e a Portugal mediante o aumento do limite de vencimento médio ponderado por sete anos, tendo em vista apoiar os esforços destes países para recuperarem o pleno acesso aos mercados e saírem com êxito dos seus programas. O presente acordo está sujeito à conclusão da 9.ª verificação do programa de ajustamento irlandês e à 7.ª verificação do programa de ajustamento português. Na sétima verificação, as autoridades portuguesas solicitaram, e a Comissão, o BCE e o FMI concordaram, a adaptação dos objetivos orçamentais de 4,5 % para 5,5 % do PIB para 2013, de 2,5 % para 4 % do PIB em 2014 e de 2 % para 2,5 % do PIB em 2015. Informações completas sobre o processo de verificação em curso deverão estar disponíveis aquando da conclusão da 7.ª missão de verificação.

A renegociação da dívida nas modalidades sugeridas nesta pergunta e na pergunta E-009603/2012 não está em discussão.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Principalmente devido ao legado da política orçamental deficiente nos anos anteriores ao pedido de assistência financeira de Portugal.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op124_en.htm (página 36).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003614/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Renegotiation of Portuguese public debt II

The announcement that the Portuguese public deficit will remain above 6% and that public debt now exceeds 122% of GDP is a good demonstration of the highly recessionary effect of implementing the EU/IMF programme. This demonstrates that we need to consolidate public finances and reduce public debt through economic growth. We will not succeed with such a recessionary policy. The budget implementation figures for the first two months of the year provide further evidence of this, with a clear gap between the 2013 budget's revenue and expenditure growth forecasts, and actual implementation in January and February. These figures also call into question the Commission's position, expressed in its answer to Question E-009603/2012, that 'public debt in Portugal remains sustainable' and that the implementation of the IMF/EU programme has been a 'success'.

The seriousness of the current situation means that we need an alternative to the IMF/EU programme, which must involve starting to renegotiate public debt. This option is nothing new — remember the process that Germany implemented 60 years ago, which pegged servicing of the debt accrued during the Second World War to 5% of exports — and is suited to the Portuguese situation.

1. Has the Commission ever considered the possibility of implementing the same solution as that hit on by Germany which, by pegging debt servicing to a given percentage of exports, made it compatible with economic growth? If not, why not?

2. Given the aforementioned new evidence that the assumptions and forecasts associated with the IMF/EU programme are flawed, is the Commission prepared, together with the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to start the process of renegotiating Portuguese public debt on the basis of the principles set out in Question E-009603/2012?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

As pointed out in the answer to Question E-009603/2012 ([1]), the Commission carries out a rigorous debt sustainability analysis at every quarterly review of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal. This analysis shows that, while the debt ratio in Portugal is very high ([2]), under the policies envisaged in the Programme public debt in Portugal remains sustainable.

As pointed out in the sixth review report ([3]), loan conditions for Portugal are very favourable. Furthermore, on 12 April 2013, the Council (Ecofin) and the Eurogroup agreed to lengthen the maturities of the EFSM and EFSF loans to Ireland and Portugal by increasing the weighted average maturity limit by seven years in view of supporting their efforts to regain full market access and successfully exit their programmes. This agreement is conditional on the completion of the 9th review of the Irish adjustment programme and the 7th review of the Portuguese adjustment programme. In the 7th review, Portuguese authorities requested, and Commission, ECB and IMF supported, to adjust the fiscal targets from 4.5% to 5.5% of GDP for 2013, from 2.5% to 4% of GDP in 2014 and from 2% to 2.5% of GDP in 2015. Full details on the ongoing expenditure review process are expected by the conclusion of the 7th review mission.

The renegotiation of the debt in the forms suggested by this question and Question E-009603/2012 are not under discussion.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) mainly because of the legacy of an ill-devised budgetary policy in the years up to Portugal's request for financial assistance.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op124_en.htm (page 36).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003615/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Suicídios aumentam em Portugal

Segundo o relatório OSPI-Europe — «Otimização de Programas de Prevenção do Suicídio e sua Implementação na Europa», apresentado recentemente, Portugal é o terceiro país da Europa onde o suicídio mais cresceu nos últimos 15 anos, estimando-se que morram mais de cinco pessoas por dia. O estudo, financiado pela Comissão Europeia e levado a cabo pela Aliança Europeia Contra a Depressão (EAAD), revela ainda que cerca de 20 milhões de europeus sofrem de depressão e mais de 60 mil morrem anualmente por suicídio.

Em Portugal, as doenças mentais comuns afetam quase 23 % da população adulta (mais de dois milhões por ano) e a depressão atinge 7,9 % dos adultos (400 mil pessoas), sendo que o suicídio resulta sobretudo destas perturbações mentais, em particular da depressão.

Esta tragédia social e humana é indissociável das devastadoras consequências da aplicação em Portugal do programa UE-FMI.

Que medidas tomou ou pensa tomar a Comissão na sequência da divulgação do estudo da EAAD?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório do projeto «Otimização de Programas de Prevenção do Suicídio e sua Implementação na Europa (OSPI— Europe)» apoiado pelo programa-quadro de investigação.

O relatório refere-se a dados do Eurostat que mostram que Portugal é um dos três países da UE cujo número de suicídios aumentou entre 1995 e 2010 (9,3 %). Com 8,2 casos por 100 000 pessoas em 2010, a taxa de suicídio em Portugal permaneceu, no entanto, abaixo da média europeia de 10,2. Portugal registou a sua taxa mais elevada de suicídio (10,1) em 2002.

Uma das razões para o aumento da taxa oficial de suicídio em Portugal deve-se ao progresso dos instrumentos estatísticos entre 2001 e 2004, aquando da introdução da décima revisão da classificação internacional de doenças (2002) e da melhoria da qualidade das estatísticas relativas à causa de morte, no seguimento de recomendações e ferramentas específicas desenvolvidas para esse fim. Como resultado, mais mortes indeterminadas foram identificadas como suicídios.

Em Portugal, entre 2007 e 2010, a taxa de suicídio permaneceu estável, com apenas um ligeiro aumento de 7,8 para 8,2 entre 2009 e 2010. Os investigadores da OSPI-Europe referem que o crescente apoio social informal poderá ser uma possível explicação para estes resultados.

Una vez que as taxas de desemprego continuam a aumentar em Portugal e noutros países, reforçar o apoio social é mais necessário do que nunca. Por forma a apoiar os Estados-Membros nesta matéria, a Comissão adotou em 20 de fevereiro de 2013, o Pacote de Investimento Social ([1]). Além disso, a Comissão lançou, em fevereiro de 2013, uma ação conjunta em matéria de Saúde Mental e Bem-estar no âmbito do Programa de saúde da UE, que reúne 24 Estados-Membros e três países associados. Um dos seus objetivos é desenvolver e apoiar um quadro comum de ação no combate à depressão e apoio à prevenção do suicídio.

([1]) COM(2013) 83 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003615/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Rise in suicides in Portugal

According to the recently published OSPI-Europe study Optimising Suicide Prevention Programs and Their Implementation in Europe, Portugal is the European country with the third-largest increase in suicides over the last 15 years; it is estimated that more than five people take their own lives per day. The study, funded by the Commission and conducted by the European Alliance Against Depression (EAAD), also shows that around 20 million Europeans suffer from depression and more than 60 000 commit suicide every year.

Common mental illnesses affect around 23% of the adult Portuguese population (more than 2 million every year) and depression affects 7.9% of adults (400 000 people). Suicide is most often the result of these psychological disorders, depression in particular.

In Portugal, this social and human tragedy is intrinsically bound up with the devastating consequences of implementing the EU/IMF programme.

What steps has the Commission taken or does it plan to take following the publication of the EAAD study?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report from the project 'Optimising Suicide Prevention Programs and their Implementation in Europe (OSPI-Europe)' supported by the Research Framework Programme.

The report refers to Eurostat data showing that Portugal is one of three EU-countries in which the number of suicides rose between 1995 and 2010 (by 9.3%). With 8.2 cases per 100,000 people in 2010, the suicide rate in Portugal remained however below the EU-average rate of 10.2. Portugal had its highest rate of suicide (10.1) in 2002.

One of the reasons for the increase in official suicide rates in Portugal is the improvement of statistical instruments in the years 2001-2004, when the tenth revision of the international classification of diseases was introduced (2002) and the quality of causes of death statistics was improved following specific recommendations and tools developed to that end. As a consequence, more undetermined deaths were identified as suicides.

Between 2007 and 2010, the suicide rate remained stable in Portugal, with only a slight increase from 7.8 to 8.2 between 2009 and 2010. The OSPI-Europe researchers refer to growing informal social support as one possible explanation.

As unemployment rates are rising further in Portugal and other countries, strengthening social support is more important than ever. To help Member States in this regard, on 20 February 2013, the Commission adopted the Social Investment Package ([1]). In addition, the Commission launched a Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being under the EU-Health Programme in February 2013, bringing together 24 Member States and 3 associated countries. One of its objectives is to develop and endorse a common framework of action against depression and to help prevent suicide.

([1]) COM(2013) 83 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003616/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Mel contaminado com pólen transgénico — Decisão do Tribunal de Justiça Europeu II

O Tribunal de Justiça Europeu (TJE), através da sua decisão sobre o pólen de milho MON 810 [Acórdão do TJE de 6 de setembro de 2011 (Processo (C-442/09) Karl Heinz Bablok/Freistaat Bayern)], decidiu que o pólen naturalmente presente no mel constitui um ingrediente, pelo que esse pólen, quando produzido a partir de uma planta geneticamente modificada (GM), é abrangido pelo âmbito de aplicação da legislação da UE relativa à autorização de produtos OGM em géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais (Regulamento (CE) n.° 1829/2003, relativo a géneros alimentícios e alimentos para animais geneticamente modificados. JO L 268 de 18.10.2003) e precisa, por conseguinte, de ser autorizado em conformidade.

Para contornar os efeitos desta decisão, a Comissão Europeia apresentou uma Proposta de Diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho que altera a Diretiva 2001/110/CE relativa ao mel. Na sequência do acórdão do TJE, é objetivo desta proposta explicitar o estatuto do pólen como um componente especial do mel, em vez de um ingrediente do mel.

Todavia, esta proposta de diretiva ainda não foi aprovada e, pelo menos brevemente, não o será, já que o Parlamento Europeu, em face da ausência do que considerou ser a necessária avaliação de impacto da proposta (que a Comissão Europeia considerou desnecessária), vai avançar para a realização dessa avaliação, o que atrasará todo o processo.

Em face do exposto, e tendo em conta que a decisão do TJE está a produzir efeito e que, naturalmente, outros casos de contaminação de mel com pólen transgénico, tal como o que motivou a queixa dos apicultores da Baviera, poderão surgir, solicito à Comissão Europeia que me informe sobre que medidas imediatas pensa adotar para lidar com esta situação. Adicionalmente, pergunto se tomará medidas para retirar do mercado todo o mel com pólen transgénico não autorizado.

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(27 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão tomou uma série de medidas destinadas a fazer face ao impacto da decisão do Tribunal de Justiça Europeu sobre a importação e a produção interna, distribuição e uso do mel, em relação ao milho MON810 e outros OGM autorizados na UE para géneros alimentícios, alimentação animal e cultivo.

Na sequência de um pedido da Comissão, a AESA ([1]) concluiu, em 20 de outubro de 2011 ([2]) e 8 de fevereiro de 2012 ([3]), que o pólen de MON810, GT73 e Ms8xRf3 é seguro para a saúde e para o meio ambiente. A Monsanto apresentou um pedido de inclusão do pólen de MON810 na autorização de comercialização, sobre a qual a AESA emitiu um parecer científico favorável em dezembro de 2012 ([4]) Todos os pedidos de autorização de OGM introduzidos ao abrigo do Regulamento (CE) n ° 1829/2003 incluem no seu âmbito, pólen nos géneros alimentícios ou como género alimentício.

No Centro Comum de Investigação ([5]) da Comissão foi recentemente validado um método para a extração de pólen do mel, que constituiu o primeiro passo para a análise da presença de pólen GM no mel. Os métodos de deteção validados no âmbito de pedidos de autorização de OGM apresentados podem ser usados em conjunto com o método de extração para verificar a presença de pólen GM não autorizado no mel. Os métodos para a quantificação de pólen GM no pólen total não estão disponíveis.

O Gabinete Europeu de Coexistência (ECoB) ([6]) está a trabalhar para atualizar as suas recomendações sobre a coexistência de milho para abranger a possível presença de pólen GM no mel. A versão revista do documento de boas práticas deverá ser publicada nas próximas semanas. O ECoB também dará uma atenção especial à questão da coexistência e produção de mel aquando do desenvolvimento de um documento de boas práticas sobre a coexistência de soja.

([1]) A Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2434.htm
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/227e.htm e ainda http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/228e.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3022.htm
([5]) Centro Comum de Investigação.
([6]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

2. Mel que contenha pólen GM não pode ser colocado no mercado da União Europeia sem uma autorização ao abrigo do Regulamento (CE) n ° 1829/2003. Os Estados-Membros são responsáveis por assegurar a aplicação da legislação da UE no seu território.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003616/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Honey contaminated with GM pollen — Court of Justice judgment II

In its judgment on pollen from MON 810 maize [Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 6 September 2011 (Case C-442/09 Karl Heinz Bablok/Freistaat Bayern)], the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that the pollen naturally present in honey constitutes an ingredient. This means that such pollen, when produced from a genetically modified (GM) plant, falls under the scope of EU legislation on authorisation of GM products in food and feed (Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed, OJ L 268, 18.10.2003) and therefore needs to be authorised pursuant thereto.

To circumvent the effects of this decision, the Commission has tabled a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/110/EC relating to honey. Following the ECJ judgment, this proposal is intended explicitly to classify pollen as a special component of honey, rather than an ingredient.

Nevertheless, this proposal for a directive has still not been adopted and nor will it be, at least for the moment: in the absence of an impact assessment of the proposal, considered by Parliament to be necessary but which the Commission considered unnecessary, Parliament is going to conduct this assessment, which will delay the whole process.

The result of the ECJ judgment is, of course, that other cases could emerge of honey contaminated with GM pollen, like that which led to the complaint by Bavarian beekeepers. Can the Commission say what immediate action it plans to take to deal with this situation? Furthermore, will it take steps to take all honey containing unauthorised GM pollen off the market?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

1. The Commission took a number of actions to address the impact of the ECJ ruling on imports and domestic production, distribution and use of honey, in relation to maize MON810 and other GMOs authorised in the EU for food and feed use and cultivation.

Following a request from the Commission, EFSA ([1]) concluded on 20 October 2011 ([2]) and 8 February 2012 ([3]) their opinion that pollen from MON810, GT73 and Ms8xRf3 are safe for health and the environment. Monsanto introduced an application to cover MON810 pollen in the marketing authorisation on which EFSA gave a favourable scientific opinion in December 2012 ([4]). All applications for GMO authorisation introduced under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 include in their scope pollen in food or as food.

The Commission's JRC ([5]) recently validated a method for extraction of pollen from honey, which is the first step of the analysis of presence of GM pollen in honey. Detection methods validated in the framework of submitted GMO applications can be used in connection with the extraction method to check the presence of non-authorised GM pollen in honey. Methods for quantification of GM pollen in total pollen are not available.

The European Coexistence Bureau (ECOB) ([6]) is updating the maize coexistence recommendations to cover the possible presence of GM pollen in honey. A revised version of the Best Practice Document should be published in the coming weeks. The ECOB will also pay particular attention to the issue of coexistence and honey production when developing a Best Practice Document on Soya Coexistence.

2. Honey containing GM pollen cannot be placed on the EU market without an authorisation under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003. Member States are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the EU legislation on their territory.

([1]) The European Food Safety Authority.
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2434.htm
([3]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/227e.htm and http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/228e.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3022.htm
([5]) Joint Research Centre.
([6]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003617/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(28 martie 2013)

Subiect: Agricultura de graniță

1 ianuarie 2007, data aderării României la Uniunea Europeană, a marcat o epocă nouă în economia agricolă și a dezvoltării rurale. În acest context, România a trebuit să își adapteze rapid economia agricolă și a dezvoltării rurale pentru a se putea integra în piața internă a Uniunii Europene și a adopta în totalitate politica agricolă comună.

Aderarea la UE este cel mai puternic factor de presiune pentru reforma rapidă a agriculturii și economiei rurale românești, dată fiind necesitatea integrării cu succes în economia rurală europeană.

Modelul european de agricultură se bazează pe un sector competitiv, orientat spre piață, îndeplinind totodată și alte funcții publice, cum ar fi protejarea mediului înconjurător, oferirea unor așezări rezidențiale mai convenabile pentru populația din spațiul rural, precum și integrarea agriculturii cu mediul înconjurător și cu silvicultura. Economia rurală românească, dominată în mare parte de agricultură, este încă slab integrată în economia de piață. Ca atare, cum vizează Comisia Europeană să sprijine eforturile autorităților de resort și ale producătorilor agricoli de aplicare a tehnicilor de marketing în vederea integrării în sistemul european al pieței unice?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(6 mai 2013)

Atât înainte cât și după aderare, UE a oferit sprijin financiar pentru promovarea dezvoltării sectorului agricol din România și pentru integrarea acestuia în piața UE, precum și pentru creșterea standardului de viață în zonele rurale. În acest scop, instrumentul-cheie este Programul Național de Dezvoltare Rurală (PNDR) 2007-2013, cofinanțat cu 8,1 miliarde de euro din Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală (FEADR).

PNDR abordează nevoile zonelor rurale orientând sprijinul către stimularea competitivității agriculturii și silviculturii, către mediul înconjurător și peisajul rural și către calitatea vieții în mediul rural și diversificarea economiei rurale.

Cea mai mare sumă de care dispune PNDR (contribuția FEADR fiind de 3,2 miliarde de euro) este alocată măsurilor destinate creșterii competitivității în agricultură, procesării alimentelor și silviculturii, cum ar fi instalarea tinerilor fermieri, modernizarea exploatațiilor agricole, creșterea valorii adăugate pentru produsele agricole și sprijinirea restructurării acelor ferme de semi-subzistență care au potențial să devină ferme viabile.

De asemenea, PNDR include măsuri destinate protejării mediului, îmbunătățirii calității vieții și stimulării dezvoltării economice a satelor din România (de ex. îmbunătățiri la nivelul infrastructurii de bază, dezvoltarea microîntreprinderilor, promovarea turismului rural).

La 12.10.2011, Comisia a prezentat propuneri legislative menite să eficientizeze PAC astfel încât aceasta să contribuie la crearea unei agriculturi mai competitive și mai durabile. În ceea ce privește dezvoltarea rurală, pentru perioada 2014-2020 propunerile prevăd, de exemplu, promovarea inovării, intensificarea cooperării și creșterea valorii adăugate în cadrul lanțului de aprovizionare cu alimente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003617/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Agriculture in border areas

1 January 2007, the date of Romania's accession to the European Union, marked a new era for agricultural economy and rural development. In this context, Romania had to adapt its agricultural economy and rural development rapidly in order to integrate into the EU internal market and to fully adopt the common agricultural policy.

Accession to the EU is the most powerful source of pressure for the rapid reform of Romanian agriculture and rural economy, given the need to integrate successfully into the European rural economy.

The European agricultural model is based on a competitive, market-oriented sector, which also fulfils other public functions, such as protecting the environment, providing more convenient residential settlements for the rural population and integrating agriculture with the environment and forestry. The Romanian rural economy, mostly dominated by agriculture, is still poorly integrated into the market economy. As such, what does the European Commission have in mind to support the efforts of the competent authorities and agricultural producers in applying marketing techniques in order to integrate into the European single market system?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

Both before and since accession the EU has provided financial support to promote the development of the Romanian agricultural sector and its integration in the EU market, and to improve living standards in rural areas. The key instrument for this purpose is the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP) 2007-2013 co-financed with EUR 8.1 billion by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

The NRDP addresses the needs of rural areas by targeting support towards improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry; the environment and the countryside; the quality of life in rural areas and the diversification of the rural economy.

The highest amount of the NRDP (EUR 3.2 billion EAFRD contribution) is allocated for actions targeting improved competitiveness in agriculture, food processing and forestry, such as setting up of young farmers, modernisation of holdings, adding value to agricultural products and supporting the restructuring of those semi-subsistence holdings with the potential to develop into viable farms.

The NRDP also includes measures aiming to protect the environment and to improve the quality of life and the economic development of Romanian villages (e.g. improvements in basic infrastructure, development of micro-enterprises, encouraging rural tourism).

On 12.10.2011 the Commission presented legal proposals designed to make the CAP a more effective policy for delivering a competitive and sustainable agriculture. As regards rural development, for 2014-2020 the proposals seek, for example, to promote innovation, increase cooperation and value-added in the food chain.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003618/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Industrial wind farms and impacts on property values

According to a recent ruling by the European Court of Justice, Member States can now be forced to pay compensation to citizens adversely affected by projects built without an environmental impact assessment (EIA). Such a ruling sets an important precedent whereby EU citizens can claim damages for loss of property value under the EIA Directive.

In the United Kingdom, national governments and local authorities are currently dealing with an overwhelming number of planning applications for wind farms, ranging from proposals for one turbine to large-scale developments with hundreds of turbines.

Where wind farms and wind turbines are concerned, UK authorities, particularly in Scotland, have stated that 'a development's impact on housing values of adjacent properties is not a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.'

If citizens can now claim compensation for loss of property value where no EIA was conducted, or where an EIA was conducted improperly, then it is logical and necessary for potential impacts on property values to be assessed either in the EIA or elsewhere.

Could the Commission outline what steps will be taken to ensure that both national and local authorities in Member States assess and evaluate all potential impacts on property values prior to giving consent for planning applications?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has already confirmed the right of individuals to rely on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (2011/92/EU ([1])) and invoke it before national courts ([2]). It has also ruled that the competent authorities are obliged to take all necessary measures for remedying the failure to carry out an EIA. National courts should determine whether it is possible for a consent already granted to be revoked or suspended in order to subject the project to EIA or, alternatively, whether it is possible for individuals to claim compensation for the harm suffered ([3]).

The recent ruling in Case C-420/11 confirms the above principles. As regards pecuniary damage for loss of property, the Court clearly states that the EIA does not include the assessment of the effects which the project has on the value of material assets. Pecuniary damage is covered by the EIA Directive only if it is the direct economic consequence of the effects on the environment of a project. The fact that the EIA Directive is breached does not, in principle, by itself, confer on an individual a right to compensation for purely pecuniary damage caused by the decrease in the value of his property as a result of the environmental effects of that project. It is for the national court to determine whether the conditions applicable to the right to compensation, including the existence of a direct causal link between the alleged breach and the damage sustained, have been satisfied.

Commission guidance on the need to consider effects on people and property ([4]) exists. In addition, the Commission has included the above findings of the Court in the updated collection of rulings on the EIA Directive ([5]).

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1.
([2]) E.g. judgment of 24 October 1996, Kraaijeveld and Others, Case C-72/95.
([3]) E.g. judgment of 7 January 2004, Delena Wells, Case C-201/02.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/eia-guidelines/g-review-full-text.pdf
([5]) See the collection of Rulings of the ECJ on EIA: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/eia_case_law.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003619/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Zmena všeobecných podmienok telekomunikačných operátorov v SR, príp. v EÚ

Európsky parlament sa v ostatnom období pričinil o zlepšenie podmienok poskytovania telekomunikačných služieb mobilnými operátormi, pokiaľ hovoríme o využívaní hlasových služieb v rámci Únie. V súčasnosti je mobilnými operátormi poskytovaná napr. sekundová tarifikácia hovorov, možnosť preniesť si nevyužité minúty alebo platba za počet reálne odoslaných SMS správ, a nie za predplatený balík. Zákazník tak platí len za tie služby, ktoré i v skutočnosti využíva. V istom zmysle nesúlad s týmto tvrdením je v prípade „mobilného internetu".

Telekomunikačné spoločnosti sú schopné aktivovať balík „internetu do mobilu" takpovediac na počkanie s možnosťou následného okamžitého využívania. V prípade zrušenia poskytovania tejto služby však zákazník musí vyčkať na koniec zúčtovacieho obdobia, a teda za službu v princípe platí i keby ju nevyužíval. Je možné legislatívne upraviť podmienky tak, aby zákazník mohol zrušiť príp. nevyužívanú službu k presnému dátumu (ako je to i v prípade začatia využívania služby) a nemusel čakať až na koniec daného zúčtovacieho obdobia?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(30. apríla 2013)

Pokiaľ ide o elektronické komunikačné služby vrátane mobilných internetových služieb, je veľmi dôležité, aby mali zákazníci pri rozhodovaní dostatok informácií. Preto reforma regulačného rámca pre elektronické komunikačné siete, ktorá nadobudla účinnosť v máji 2011, obsahovala v tejto súvislosti dodatočné záruky. Nové pravidlá ([1]) objasňujú najmä skutočnosť, že informácie o cenách a podmienkach poskytovaných služieb musia byť uverejnené v ľahko dostupnej a porovnateľnej podobe. Okrem toho musia byť informácie o trvaní zmluvy, podmienkach jej zrušenia a zrušenia služieb v zmluve jasne a zrozumiteľne stanovené.

V rámci právnych predpisov EÚ nie sú však poskytovatelia mobilných internetových služieb povinní zrušiť ponuku balíka mobilných internetových služieb hneď po doručení žiadosti. Operátori preto môžu počkať na skončenie príslušného zúčtovacieho obdobia a službu zrušiť až potom. Hoci rámec EÚ pre elektronické komunikácie neurčuje členským štátom žiadne požiadavky ohľadom regulácií špecifických činností určitých operátorov, nezabraňuje im v prijatí vhodných opatrení na ochranu spotrebiteľa na vnútroštátnej úrovni. Telekomunikačné regulačné orgány v každom členskom štáte ([2]) nesú priamu zodpovednosť za posúdenie toho, v akom rozsahu špecifické činnosti miestnych operátorov spĺňajú požadovanú úroveň ochrany spotrebiteľa, a za prijatie nápravného opatrenia v prípade potreby.

([1]) Články 20 – 21 smernice Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2002/22/ES zo 7. marca 2002 o univerzálnej službe a právach užívateľov týkajúcich sa elektronických komunikačných sietí a služieb, zmenenej smernicou 2009/136/ES.

([2]) V rámci Slovenska je to Telekomunikačný úrad Slovenskej republiky.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003619/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Changing the general conditions for telecoms operators in the Slovak Republic and in the EU

In relation to the use of voice services in the EU, the European Parliament has in recent years endeavoured to improve the conditions under which mobile operators offer telecommunications services. For example, mobile operators now provide per-second call billing, the option of transferring unused minutes and payment for the number of SMS messages actually sent, rather than for a prepaid package. Customers thus pay only for the services that they actually use. The same cannot be said, however, for 'mobile Internet'.

Telecommunications companies are capable of activating a 'mobile Internet' package while you wait, as it were, with the possibility of immediate use. When they wish to cancel this service, however, customers must wait until the end of the billing period, and so in principle they pay for the service even if they do not use it. Is it possible to modify conditions legislatively so that customers can terminate an unused service as of a precise date (as happens when commencing the use of a service) without having to wait until the end of a given billing period?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

It is important that consumers make informed choices with regard to electronic communications services, including mobile Internet services. That is why the reform of the regulatory framework for electronic communications, which took effect in May 2011, included additional guarantees in this respect. The new rules ([1]) clarify, notably, that information on prices and terms and conditions in respect of services provided must be published in an easily accessible and comparable form. Moreover, information on duration of a contract and the conditions for termination of services and of the contract has to be specified in the contract in a clear and comprehensive manner.

There is, however, no obligation under EC law for providers of mobile Internet services to offer deactivation of a mobile Internet package immediately upon receipt of such a request. Operators may thus wait until the expiration of a given billing period to terminate a service. Although the EU framework for electronic communications does not entail any requirements for Member States to regulate this specific practice of certain operators, it does not prevent them from taking an appropriate consumer protection measure at national level. The telecoms regulators in each Member State ([2]) have the primary responsibility to consider the extent to which specific practices of local operators meet the required level of consumer protection and to take corrective action if deemed appropriate.

([1]) Articles 20-21 of Directive 2002/22/EC of Parliament and Council of 7 March 2002 on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services, as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC.

([2]) For Slovakia, it is Telekomunicany urad Slovenskej Republiky.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003620/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Voda ako verejný statok

Voda je verejným statkom, nie obchodnou komoditou. Malo by byť povinnosťou európskych inštitúcií a všetkých členských štátov zaistiť obyvateľom právo na vodu a hygienu. Zásobovanie vodou a správa vodných zdrojov by sa nemali stať predmetom obchodu.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi sa chce Komisia pričiniť o návrh legislatívy podporujúcej a hájacej ľudské právo na vodu a hygienu tak, aby bol zaistený prístup k vode a k hygiene ako k základnej verejnej službe pre všetkých bez rozdielu?

Aké snahy chce vyvinúť Komisia na zaistenie univerzálneho prístupu k vode a hygiene?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(29. mája 2013)

Na minuloročnej konferencii OSN o udržateľnom rozvoji v Riu EÚ podporila rezolúciu OSN ([1]), ktorou znovu potvrdila svoje záväzky v oblasti ľudského práva na bezpečnú pitnú vodu a primerané hygienické podmienky. EÚ sa zaväzuje postupne zaistiť obyvateľstvu výkon tohto práva pri plnom rešpektovaní národnej suverenity.

Niektoré prvky práva na bezpečnú vodu a primerané hygienické podmienky sú už upravené právnymi predpismi EÚ. Smernica o pitnej vode ([2]) zaručuje bezpečnosť pitnej vody v EÚ, smernica o čistení komunálnych odpadových vôd ([3]) prispieva k dobrým hygienickým podmienkam tým, že vyžaduje primerané čistenie odpadových vôd, a rámcová smernica o vode ([4]) stanovuje právny rámec na ochranu a obnovu čistoty vody v Európe a na zaistenie jej dlhodobého udržateľného používania. EÚ uznáva, že voda nie je typickým komerčným výrobkom a že členské štáty môžu vo svojich cenových politikách zohľadniť sociálne dopady.

Komisia vie aj o existencii európskej iniciatívy občanov, ktorá sa venuje tejto otázke. Až bude iniciatíva predložená, Komisia k nej zaujme stanovisko.

Komisia pripomína, že rozhodnutie, či zveriť poskytovanie vodných služieb verejným alebo súkromným prevádzkovateľom, prislúcha v súlade so ZFEÚ (článok 345) členským štátom.

([1]) Rezolúcia OSN 66/218, bod 121.
([2]) Smernica 98/83/ES, Ú. v. ES L 330, 5.12.1998.
([3]) Smernica 91/271/EHS, Ú. v. ES L 135, 30.05.1991.
([4]) Smernica 2000/60/ES, Ú. v. ES L 327, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003620/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Water as a public good

Water is a public good, not a commercial commodity. It should be the duty of European institutions and all Member States to secure people's right to water and sanitation. Water supply and the administration of water sources should not become an item of commerce.

What concrete steps does the Commission intend to take towards draft legislation supporting and defending the human right to water and sanitation, so that access to water and sanitation is ensured for all without distinction, as a basic public service?

What efforts does the Commission intend to make in order to ensure universal access to water and sanitation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

At the UN conference on sustainable development in Rio last year, the EU endorsed the UN resolution ([1]) reaffirming its commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, to be progressively realised for the population with full respect for national sovereignty.

Some components of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation are already covered by EU legislation. The Drinking Water Directive ([2]) ensures the safety of drinking water within the EU, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive ([3]) contributes to good sanitation by requiring adequate waste water treatment and the Water Framework Directive ([4]) establishes a legal framework to protect and restore clean water across Europe and ensure its long-term, sustainable use. It recognises that water is not a commercial product like any other and that Member States, in their water pricing policies, may have regard to social effects.

The Commission is also aware of a European Citizens' Initiative that deals with this issue. Once the Initiative is submitted, the Commission will take a position on it.

The Commission recalls that, in accordance with the TFEU (Article 345), it is for Member States to decide whether the provision of water services should happen through public or private operators.

([1]) UN Resolution 66/218, para 121.
([2]) Directive 98/83/EC; OJ L 33, 5.12.1998.
([3]) Directive 91/271/EEC; OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.
([4]) Directive 2000/60/EC; OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003621/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Škandál s konským mäsom

V uplynulých dňoch a týždňoch bol v Írsku prostredníctvom náhodných kontrol objavený rozsiahly podvod s konským mäsom. Aj tento rozsiahly celoeurópsky škandál bezpodmienečne poukazuje na potrebu zvýšeného počtu prísnejších kontrol v záujme minimalizovania ohrozenia európskych spotrebiteľov. Komisia musí zabezpečiť, aby všetky potraviny boli dodávané na trh a označované v súlade s platnou legislatívou. Tiež je na mieste (v prípade porušenia predpisov) ukladať vyššie sankcie.

Komisia sa nesmie uspokojiť so súčasnou situáciou reflektujúcou bezpečnosť potravín len preto, že nedostatky boli odhalené, takpovediac, náhodou. Ako sa však chce konkrétnym spôsobom pričiniť o zavedenie účinnejších kontrolných mechanizmov, aby sa pri potravinových inšpekciách podobné podvody neopakovali?

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003623/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Hygiena mäsa a mäsových výrobkov

Aj nedávne potravinové škandály s konským mäsom prispeli k tomu, aby skupina S&D vyzvala na posilnenie nezávislých kontrol priamo súvisiacich s dodržiavaním nariadenia o hygiene potravín. Pred dvoma rokmi Európsky parlament hlasoval za striktnejšie pravidlá označovania potravín a v tejto súvislosti je stále potrebné a dôležité, aby sa prijaté záväzky dodržiavali. Predajné spoločnosti by mali prevziať zodpovednosť za svoje vlastné dodávateľské reťazce. V súčasnosti však existuje až príliš veľa legislatívnych medzier, pokým sa mäso dostane z bitúnkov cez dodávateľské reťazce až ku konečnému spotrebiteľovi.

Je veľmi dôležité, a to predovšetkým v záujme ochrany zdravia, aby sa tieto legislatívne medzery vyplnili. Komisia navrhuje revíziu nariadenia vzťahujúceho sa na hygienu potravín. Je podľa zástupcov Komisie tento krok dostačujúci v snahe nespoliehať sa len na samoregulačné nariadenia, pokiaľ hovoríme o dohliadaní na hygienu mäsa a mäsových výrobkov?

Spoločná odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(21. mája 2013)

Napriek nedávnym prípadom ako podvod s neoznačeným konským mäsom vo výrobkoch z hovädzieho mäsa sa Komisia domnieva, že legislatíva EÚ v oblasti bezpečnosti potravín je v podstate postačujúca a že členské štáty sú prostredníctvom systémov kontroly a presadzovania právnych predpisov schopné identifikovať a riešiť obavy, ktoré vznikli v rámci celého potravinového reťazca.

Komisia si však uvedomuje, že sa treba poučiť a prípadne urobiť vhodné zmeny vzhľadom na získané skúsenosti a aktívne sa zamýšľa nad tým, ako posilniť právne predpisy EÚ a kontroly v budúcnosti.

Niektoré z týchto úvah sú zohľadnené v akčnom pláne, ktorý Komisia predložila členským štátom a Európskemu parlamentu 15. marca 2013, vrátane konkrétnych činností a opatrení týkajúcich sa týchto základných prvkov: boj proti potravinovým podvodom, testovacie programy, konské pasy, vykonávanie úradných kontrol, sankcie a nakoniec označovanie pôvodu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003621/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: The horse meat scandal

Widespread fraud involving horse meat has been discovered in Ireland in recent days and weeks through random checks. This widespread pan-European scandal unequivocally points to the need for a greater number of more stringent checks in order to minimise the threat to European consumers. The Commission must ensure that all food is supplied to the market and labelled in accordance with the applicable legislation. It is also appropriate (in case of infringement) to impose higher penalties.

The Commission cannot be satisfied with the current situation where food safety depends only on deficiencies being discovered by chance, as it were. What concrete steps does the Commission intend to take to push for the introduction of more effective control mechanisms, so that food inspections may prevent similar cases of fraud from happening again?

Question for written answer E-003623/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Meat and meat product hygiene

The recent food scandals over horse meat have led the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament to call for stronger independent controls directly linked to compliance with food hygiene regulations. Two years ago, the European Parliament voted for stricter food labelling rules, and in this context it is still necessary and important that the commitments adopted are complied with. Retail firms should take responsibility for their own supply chains. At present, however, there are too many legislative gaps as meat progresses along the supply chain from the slaughterhouse to the final consumer.

It is very important, in the interests of health protection in particular, to close these legislative gaps. The Commission is proposing a review of food hygiene regulations. Does the Commission regard this step as sufficient in terms of the effort to end our reliance on self-regulatory measures alone for the monitoring of meat and meat product hygiene?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Despite recent incidents like the fraud on unlabelled horsemeat in beef products the Commission considers that EU legislation on food safety is fundamentally sound and that Member States' control and enforcement systems are capable of identifying and handling food concerns arising along the food chain.

However the Commission is aware that lessons must be learnt and, if necessary, appropriate changes are to be made in the light of experience gained and is actively considering how to further strengthen EU rules and controls in future.

Some of those considerations are reflected in an Action Plan, presented by the Commission to the Member States and to the European Parliament on 15 March 2013, including specific actions and measures on the following basic elements: fighting food fraud, testing programmes, horse passports, official controls implementation and penalties and, finally, origin labelling.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003622/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Elektromagnetické pole a ľudské zdravie

Medzinárodná aliancia EMF uskutočnila 20. januára 2013 v Európskej komisii workshop zameraný na komunikáciu o súvislostiach týkajúcich sa problematiky elektromagnetického poľa a ľudského zdravia. Čo sa týka ochrany verejnosti pred možnými účinkami elektromagnetických polí, zmluvy Európskej únie delegujú primárnu zodpovednosť na členské štáty a nezahŕňajú kompetencie Komisie do právnych predpisov. Odporúčanie Rady o obmedzení expozície EMP (1999/519/ES) bolo prijaté s cieľom navrhnúť spoločný ochranný rámec i v snahe prispieť k súdržnosti medzi rôznymi národnými prístupmi.

Ako sa chce Komisia pokúsiť o väčšiu interakciu medzi rôznymi právnymi poriadkami v rámci danej problematiky, aby sa zlepšila zrozumiteľnosť a dostupnosť správy pre širokú verejnosť?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(14. mája 2013)

Odporúčanie Rady o obmedzení vystavenia verejnosti elektromagnetickým poliam (1999/519/ES) ([1]) vytvára spoločný ochranný rámec, ktorého cieľom je prispieť ku konzistentnosti rôznych prístupov na vnútroštátnej úrovni.

Opatrenie Komisie sa zameriava na monitorovanie vykonávania tohto odporúčania v rámci jednotlivých členských štátov a podávanie súvisiacich správ s prihliadnutím na informácie od vnútroštátnych orgánov ([2]) a pravidelné preskúmanie dostupných vedeckých dôkazov.

V tejto súvislosti Komisia pravidelne žiada Vedecký výbor pre vznikajúce a novozistené zdravotné riziká o nezávislé aktualizovanie najnovších vedeckých dôkazov s cieľom zaistiť, aby sa prostredníctvom expozičných limitov uvedených v odporúčaní Rady zabezpečila potrebná vysoká úroveň ochrany zdravia. Zo všetkých doterajších hodnotení vyplýva, že nejestvuje vedecké odôvodnenie na revíziu expozičných limitov uvedených v odporúčaní. Nová aktualizácia bola spustená a verejné konzultácie by sa mali začať do júna 2013.

Komisia navyše organizuje pravidelné schôdze s členskými štátmi, zainteresovanými stranami a vedcami. Ako príklad možno uviesť schôdzu z 20. februára 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/electromagnetic_fields/eu_actions/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003622/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Electromagnetic fields and human health

The International EMF Alliance held a workshop at the European Commission on 20 January 2013 on risk communication in relation to electromagnetic fields and human health. With regard to the protection of the public against the potential effects of electromagnetic fields, the EU treaties delegate primary responsibility to the Member States and do not include the Commission's powers in the legislation. The Council Recommendation on the limitation of exposure to EMFs (1999/519/EC) was adopted with a view to establishing a common protective framework and in an effort to contribute to consistency between the various national approaches.

How does the Commission plan to achieve greater interaction between the various jurisdictions in this area in order to improve the comprehensibility and accessibility of the administration for the general public?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Council Recommendation on the limitation of exposure to Electromagnetic Fields (1999/519/EC) ([1]) establishes a common protective framework which seeks to contribute to consistency between the various national approaches.

The Commission action focuses on monitoring and reporting about Member States' implementation of this recommendation, based on the information received from the national authorities ([2]), and on regularly reviewing scientific evidence available.

In this context, the Commission regularly asks the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks to provide an independent update of the latest scientific evidence to make sure that the exposure limits of the Council Recommendation provide the necessary high level of health protection. All assessments to date have concluded that there is no scientific rationale to revise the exposure limits presented in the recommendation. A new update has been launched, with an expected public consultation by June 2013.

In addition, the Commission organises regular meetings with Member States, stakeholders and scientists, such as the meeting held on 20 February 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/electromagnetic_fields/eu_actions/index_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003624/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Zdravotná starostlivosť v rámci EÚ

Nemálo občanov Únie pracuje v inom európskom členskom štáte než vo vlastnom. Cezhraniční pracovníci však môžu lekárske ošetrenie získať i v krajine, v ktorej žijú. Toto zastrešuje európsky formulár S1. Ak sa však európski občania rozhodnú kvôli zdravotnej starostlivosti vrátiť do domovskej krajiny, často nastáva problém pri „preukazovaní" dôvodu neprítomnosti zamestnávateľovi po návrate do zamestnania.

Nevidí Komisia možnosť riešenia tejto nezrovnalosti napr. prostredníctvom obdobných európskych formulárov ako v prípade S1, v danom prípade však potvrdzujúc neprítomnosť na pracovisku z dôvodu liečenia sa vo „svojom domácom" štáte?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(17. mája 2013)

Formulár S1 je prenosným dokumentom, ktorý má slúžiť občanom pri vykonávaní nariadenia (ES) č. 883/2004 o koordinácii systémov sociálneho zabezpečenia ([1]), a to pri registrácii na využívanie zdravotnej starostlivosti v členskom štáte pobytu. Počet prenosných dokumentov sa obmedzuje na tie, ktoré sú na uplatňovanie nariadenia (ES) č. 883/2004 najnevyhnutnejšie. Lekárske osvedčenia, ktoré vydávajú lekári, však nespadajú do pôsobnosti nariadenia (ES) č. 883/2004, a teda v tomto nariadení neexistuje žiaden právny základ na zavedenie podobného formulára, ktorý by vydávali lekári v inom členskom štáte a ktorý by potvrdzoval neprítomnosť na pracovisku zo zdravotných dôvodov.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 166, 30.4.2004, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003624/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Healthcare in the EU

Many EU citizens work in a Member State other than their own. Cross-border workers can nevertheless also receive medical treatment in the country in which they live. This is covered by the European form S1. However, if European citizens decide to return to their home country for healthcare, a problem often arises when 'proving' to their employer the reason for their absence after returning to work.

Does the Commission not see a means of resolving this discrepancy, for example, by using similar European forms to the S1, but in this case confirming absence from the workplace due to treatment in the 'home' country?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The S1 form is a Portable Document developed to serve citizens in the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on coordination of social security systems ([1]), namely to register in order to receive healthcare in the Member State of residence. The number of portable documents is limited to the most necessary for the application of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004. However, the medical certificates issued by doctors do not fall in the scope of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and therefore, there is no legal basis in this regulation to develop a similar form confirming absence in the workplace for medical reasons issued by a doctor in another Member State.

([1]) OJ L 204, 4.8.2007.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003626/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Testy DNA a ochrana údajov

V rámci problematiky genetického poradenstva predstavujú práve informovaný súhlas pacienta či ochrana citlivých osobných údajov jeden z kľúčových prvkov a opatrení napomáhajúcich ochranu ľudských práv pri genetickom testovaní. Genetické testy môžu byť nápomocné pri spoznávaní rizikových faktorov, umožnia nám včas na ne reagovať a rovnako môžu uľahčiť diagnostiku. V každom prípade je však nevyhnutné dbať na ochranu ľudských práv a zároveň i osobných údajov.

Aké opatrenia môže Komisia urobiť v súvislosti s testami DNA, aby nedochádzalo k porušovaniu práv či nedostatočnej ochrane údajov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(3. júna 2013)

Komisia si uvedomuje dôležitosť pravidiel ochrany údajov v kontexte genetického testovania, najmä vzhľadom na skutočnosť, že smernica 95/46/ES ([1]) zaraďuje údaje týkajúce sa zdravia do osobitnej kategórie osobných údajov, ktoré je možné spracovávať len za určitých špecifických podmienok (článok 8). Údaje o zdravotnom stave je možné spracovávať so súhlasom dotknutej osoby, okrem prípadu keď to vylučujú právne predpisy členského štátu alebo ak sú splnené niektoré ďalšie kritériá, napr. ak ide o životne dôležité záujmy dotknutej osoby. Genetické údaje patria do tejto kategórie, pretože sú považované za údaje o zdravotnom stave.

Návrh Komisie týkajúci sa všeobecného nariadenia o ochrane údajov predložený v januári 2012 ([2]) obsahuje definíciu genetických údajov (článok 4.10) a zaraďuje spracovanie genetických údajov do „osobitnej kategórie údajov“ (článok 9).

Súčasná smernica 95/46/ES bola transponovaná vo všetkých členských štátoch Európskej únie. Bez toho, aby boli dotknuté právomoci Komisie ako strážkyne zmluvy, vnútroštátne dozorné orgány zodpovedné za ochranu údajov predstavujú kompetentné orgány dohliadajúce na uplatňovanie vnútroštátnych opatrení, ktorými sa vykonáva smernica 95/46/ES.

([1]) Smernica 95/46/ES chráni základné práva a slobody fyzických osôb týkajúce sa ochrany ich osobných údajov. Ú. v. ES L 281, 23.11.1995.
([2]) KOM(2012)11 – NARIADENIE EURÓPSKEHO PARLAMENTU A RADY o ochrane fyzických osôb pri spracúvaní osobných údajov a o voľnom pohybe takýchto údajov (všeobecné nariadenie o ochrane údajov).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003626/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: DNA tests and data protection

In genetic counselling, informed patient consent and the protection of sensitive personal data are among the key elements and measures that help protect human rights in relation to genetic testing. Genetic tests can be helpful in the identification of risk factors, allowing us to react to them in good time, and they can also facilitate diagnosis. In any case, however, it is essential to ensure the protection of human rights and of personal data.

With regard to DNA tests, what measures can the Commission take to prevent infringements of rights and inadequate data protection?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the importance of data protection rules in the context of genetic testing, particularly given the fact that in Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) data concerning health is included in a special category of personal data for which processing is prohibited only under specific conditions (Article 8). Health data may be processed with the consent of the data subject except if this is excluded by Member State law, or if a number of other criteria are satisfied, such as if the vital interests of the data subject are at stake. As genetic data are considered health data, it would fall within this category.

The Commission proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation submitted in January 2012 ([2]), contains a definition of genetic data (Article 4.10) and includes the processing of genetic data in the 'special categories of data' (Article 9).

The existing Directive 95/46/EC has been transposed in all Member States of the European Union. Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, national data protection supervisory authorities are the competent bodies to monitor the application of the national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons with respect to the protection of their personal data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.

([2]) COM(2012) 11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003627/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Revízia poistenia jadrových elektrární

Európsky parlament vo svojom uznesení z uplynulých dní apeluje na skutočnosť, že všetky prijaté odporúčania by mali byť – pokiaľ možno – bezodkladne uvádzané do praxe. Všetky s tým spojené náklady sú na pleciach prevádzkovateľov, a nie daňových poplatníkov. Poslanci rovnako schválili dodatok k uzneseniu, pričom testy boli považované za neúplné, keďže v nich neboli zohľadnené také skutočnosti, ako sú možné chyby v dôsledku zlyhania ľudského faktora, chyby vo vnútri nádob reaktorov, opotrebovanie materiálu a podobne. Okrem iného však záťažové testy preukázali, že prakticky veľká väčšina elektrární by mala vynakladať úsilie na zvýšenie bezpečnosti.

Je v možnostiach a kompetenciách Komisie dohliadnuť na zvýšenie bezpečnosti jednotlivých jadrových elektrární?

Respektíve, možno v danom kontexte počítať so zopakovaním záťažových testov už i so zahrnutím a zohľadnením opomenutých vyššie uvedených sekundárnych rizík?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(13. mája 2013)

1. Podľa existujúceho právneho rámca EÚ majú členské štáty zaistiť, aby držitelia licencií pravidelne systematicky a podložene pod dohľadom príslušného regulačného orgánu hodnotili, overovali a nepretržite zdokonaľovali bezpečnosť svojich jadrových zariadení ([1]).

Vykonávanie opatrení na zvýšenie jadrovej bezpečnosti stanovených v priebehu záťažových testov je vo vnútroštátnej právomoci. Členské štáty v súčasnej dobe realizujú odporúčania zo záťažových testov. Komisia by chcela odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-002085/2013, kde je možné nájsť ďalšie informácie o tejto problematike.

2. Na základe cenných skúseností zo záťažových testov a v rámci nepretržitého úsilia o revíziu a posilnenie ustanovení súčasnej smernice o jadrovej bezpečnosti Komisia v súčasnosti zvažuje návrh na vykonávanie partnerských hodnotení vo vybraných oblastiach jadrovej bezpečnosti jadrových zariadení vrátane tých, ktoré neboli súčasťou procesu záťažových testov.

([1]) Článok 6 ods. 1 smernice Rady 2009/71/Euratom, ktorou sa zriaďuje rámec Spoločenstva pre jadrovú bezpečnosť jadrových zariadení, Ú. v. EÚ L 172, 2.7.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003627/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Review of nuclear power plant insurance

In its resolution a few days ago, the European Parliament responded to the fact that all recommendations should-where possible-be put into practice immediately. All associated costs should be borne by the operators, not taxpayers. MEPs also approved an addendum to the resolution in which the tests were considered incomplete because they did not take into account matters such as possible faults due to human error, faults inside reactor vessels, material wear, and the like. Among other things, however, the stress tests have shown that a large majority of power plants should make efforts to improve safety.

It is within the means and powers of the Commission to ensure the improvement of the safety of individual power plants?

Alternatively, in this context, can we count on the stress tests being repeated, this time including and taking into account the secondary risks referred to above that had previously been overlooked?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

1. According to the existing EU legal framework Member States need to ensure that licence holders, under the supervision of the competent regulatory authority, assess and verify, as well as continuously improve, the nuclear safety of their nuclear installations regularly and in a systematic and verifiable manner ([1]).

The implementation of the nuclear safety improvements identified in the course of the stress tests is a national responsibility. The stress test recommendations are currently being implemented in the Member States. For further information on this issue, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-002085/2013.

2. Based on the valuable experience gained from the stress tests, the Commission is currently examining, in the context of its ongoing effort to revise and strengthen the provisions of the current nuclear safety directive, to propose the conduct of peer reviews on selected topics of nuclear safety in nuclear installations, including on topics which have not been dealt with in the stress tests process.

([1]) Article 6(1) of Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations; OJ L172, 2.7.2009.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003628/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Rozšírenie Schengenského priestoru

Ministri členských štátov nedokázali počas zasadnutia Rady EÚ pre spravodlivosť a vnútorné záležitosti dospieť ku konsenzu vo veci vstupu Bulharska a Rumunska do Schengenskej zóny. Slovensko tomuto kroku vyslovilo podporu. Iné krajiny ako napr. Nemecko, Fínsko či Holandsko sú proti. Ako dôvod uvádzajú predovšetkým nedostatočný posun vpred v boji proti korupcii a organizovanému zločinu.

Je v možnostiach Komisie pričiniť sa konkrétnymi krokmi k dosiahnutiu jednotného stanoviska členských štátov v tejto otázke?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(24. mája 2013)

V aktoch o pristúpení Bulharska a Rumunska sa určuje, že ustanovenia schengenského *acquis* sa na tieto dva členské štáty plne uplatňujú iba po vykonaní hodnotenia a po prijatí príslušného rozhodnutia Rady, po porade s Európskym parlamentom. Komisia v tomto procese nezohráva žiadnu formálnu úlohu.

Na zasadnutí Rady pre spravodlivosť a vnútorné veci 7. a 8. marca írske predsedníctvo po diskusii o súčasnom stave, pokiaľ ide o pristúpenie Bulharska a Rumunska k schengenskému priestoru, zhrnulo, že „Rada sa na základe žiadosti Európskej rady z decembra 2012 vrátila k otázke pristúpenia Rumunska a Bulharska do schengenského priestoru. Pripomenula výsledky zasadnutia Európskej rady z decembra 2012, ako aj príslušné závery predchádzajúcich zasadnutí Európskej rady a Rady SVV. Rada sa rozhodla znovu zaoberať touto otázkou na konci roka 2013 s cieľom zvážiť ďalší postup na základe dvojfázového prístupu“.

Komisia naďalej podporuje pristúpenie týchto dvoch členských štátov k schengenskému priestoru a bude i naďalej využívať rolu sprostredkovateľa pri dosahovaní jednotného názoru členských štátov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003628/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Enlargement of the Schengen Area

During a meeting of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council, Member State ministers failed to reach a consensus on the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen Area. Slovakia expressed support for the step. Other countries, such as Germany, Finland and the Netherlands, are opposed. The reasons they gave related in particular to a lack of progress in the fight against corruption and organised crime.

Is it possible for the Commission to take concrete steps towards the achievement of a unified position of the Member States on this issue?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

Bulgaria's and Romania's Acts of Accession determine that the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* shall fully apply in these two Member States only following an evaluation and a Council decision to that effect, after consultation of the European Parliament. The Commission has no formal role in this process.

After the state of play discussion on Bulgaria's and Romania's Schengen accession at the 7/8 March Council (JHA), the Irish Presidency concluded that 'The Council reverted to the issue of the Schengen accession of Romania and Bulgaria, as requested by the European Council in December 2012. It recalled the outcome of the European Council meeting in December 2012 as well as all relevant conclusions of previous European Councils and of the JHA Council. The Council decided to address this issue again by the end of 2013 with a view to considering the way forward on the basis of a two-step approach'.

The Commission continues to support the two Member States' accession to the Schengen area and will continue using its role as facilitator to reach an agreement among Member States.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003629/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: EÚ proti ženskej obriezke

Podľa štúdie inštitútu EIGE jednotlivé krajiny pristupujú k problematike mrzačenia ženských pohlavných orgánov rôzne a nedostáva sa jej dostatočnej pozornosti ani v rámci otázok rodovej rovnosti. Táto praktika sa vykonáva z rôznych kultúrnych, náboženských či sociálnych dôvodov u mladých dievčat od 15 rokov veku. Európska komisia ešte v septembri 2010 v rámci Stratégie rovnosti žien a mužov 2010 – 2015 výslovne nástojí na ukončení mrzačenia ženských pohlavných orgánov.

V uplynulých dňoch Komisia opätovne potvrdila svoje odhodlanie skoncovať s touto krutou praktikou. I vďaka spomenutej stratégii na roky 2010 – 2015 možno povedať, že badať pokrok v tejto oblasti?

Darí sa Komisii konkrétnymi opatreniami bojovať proti ženskej obriezke?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(14. mája 2013)

V roku 2013 sa uskutoční séria aktivít zameraných na problematiku ženskej obriezky. Dňa 6. marca podpredsedníčka Redingová usporiadala okrúhly stôl o ženskej obriezke za účasti poslancov EP. Výsledky verejnej konzultácie, ktorá sa začala v ten istý deň, budú zapracované do politiky Komisie v tejto oblasti. Okrem toho Komisia podporí informačné a komunikačné činnosti členských štátov zamerané na ukončenie násilia páchaného na ženách, ktorého súčasťou je aj ženská obriezka (prostredníctvom programu Progress), a projekty občianskych organizácií zamerané na boj proti ženskej obriezke a iným škodlivým praktikám (prostredníctvom programu Daphne).

Pokiaľ ide o vonkajšiu pomoc tretím krajinám, Komisia presadzuje dvojaký prístup. Podporuje kampaň za zlepšenie vnútroštátnych právnych predpisov, ako aj rozvoj primeraných vnútroštátnych politík, ktorých cieľom je podpora a ochrana práv žien a zákaz škodlivých praktík. Zároveň podporuje iniciatívy na budovanie kapacít úradníkov štátnej správy, ako aj informačné kampane a zvyšovanie povedomia vo všetkých sektoroch spoločnosti.

Okrem toho Komisia v najchudobnejších krajinách financuje projekty, v ktorých kľúčovú úlohu zohráva občianska spoločnosť. Príkladom je inovatívny projekt EÚ a UNICEF, ktorý prispel k zmene postojov a posunu smerom k ukončeniu praktík ženskej obriezky v Egypte, Eritrei, Etiópii, Senegale a Sudáne.

Boj proti všetkým podobám násilia páchaného na ženách a dievčatách zostane jednou z priorít budúceho programu spolupráce.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003629/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: EU against female circumcision

According to a study carried out by the European Institute for Gender Equality, Member States are adopting inconsistent approaches to female genital mutilation, and the subject is not gaining sufficient attention, even in the context of gender equality issues. The practice is carried out for various cultural, religious and social reasons on young women aged 15 and older. In September 2010, as part of its strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015, the Commission explicitly called for an end to female genital mutilation.

In the past few days, the Commission has reiterated its intention to put an end to this cruel practice. Has the aforementioned strategy for equality resulted in any progress being made on this issue?

Has the Commission adopted specific measures to combat female circumcision?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

2013 will see a series of activities to address FGM. On 6 March Vice-President Reding hosted a Round-Table on FGM with the participation of MEPs. The results of a public consultation launched the same day will feed into the Commission's policy development on FGM. The Commission will also support Member States' information and communication activities aiming at ending violence against women including FGM (through the Progress program) and grass-root level organisations for projects aiming at fighting FGM and other harmful practices (through the Daphne program).

In its external assistance to third countries, the Commission adopts a two-pronged approach. It supports advocacy for the improvement of national legislation as well as the development of adequate national policies for the promotion and protection of women's rights and the prohibition of harmful practices. It also supports capacity-building initiatives for government officials and advocacy and awareness-raising for all sectors of society.

The Commission also funds projects in the poorest countries with civil society often playing a crucial role. For instance, an innovative EU and Unicef project has contributed to change attitudes and to progress towards ending female genital mutilation in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Senegal and Sudan.

The fight against all forms of violence against women and girls will remain among the priorities of the future cooperation programme.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003630/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Agropolitikou voči chudobe

Spravodajca OSN pre právo na potraviny Olivier De Schutter vyzýval Európsku úniu, aby sa vzdala svojich zámerov v produkcii biopalív a pomohla tak uvoľniť globálne ceny potravín. V reforme spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky nie sú hájené len záujmy európskych farmárov, ale tiež množstva ľudí na celom svete, ktorých sa politika Európskej únie dotýka.

Aký postoj zastáva Komisia ku vzťahu k biopalivám?

Podporuje stanovisko spravodajcu, pokiaľ hovoríme o znížení ich produkcie?

Ako sa tento krok môže odraziť v cenách potravín?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(29. mája 2013)

Komisia verí, že biopalivá dokážu pozitívne prispieť ku klimatickým a energetickým cieľom EÚ, ak sa všetky otázky týkajúce sa udržateľnosti riadne vyriešia.

Pokiaľ ide o vplyv politiky EÚ v oblasti biopalív na potravinovú bezpečnosť, Komisia upozorňuje váženú pani poslankyňu na svoje odpovede na otázky na písomné zodpovedanie E-002837/2013, ktorú adresoval pán Zbigniew Ziobro, a E-009442/2012, ktorú adresoval pán Diogo Feio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003630/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Agricultural policy versus poverty

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, has called on the European Union to abandon its plans for biofuel production, and thus to help liberate global food prices. The reform of the common agricultural policy defends the interests not only of European farmers, but also of many people throughout the world affected by the EU policy.

What position does the Commission take in relation to biofuels?

Does it support the opinion of the Rapporteur in terms of reducing biofuel production?

How might this step affect food prices?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission believes that biofuels can make a positive contribution towards the EU's climate and energy objectives, if all sustainability issues are properly addressed.

As regards the EU biofuel policy impact on food security, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to Written Questions E-002837/2013 by Mr Zbigniew Ziobro and E-009442/2012 by Mr Diogo Feio.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003631/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Energia v Európskej únii v budúcnosti

Európska komisia predložila v decembri 2011 plán pre nízkouhlíkové hospodárstvo do roku 2050, ktorý poskytuje niekoľko scenárov pre budúce štruktúry zásobovania energiou v Európe takým spôsobom, aby bolo možné splniť ciele zníženia emisií. A práve vyšší podiel obnoviteľných zdrojov energie a zvýšenie energetickej účinnosti predstavujú kľúčové aspekty prechodu na nízkouhlíkový energetický systém. Bude nutné výrazne obmedziť využívanie ropy a uhlia, nakoľko ide o vysoko znečisťujúce palivá.

Je reálne dodržať plán predložený Komisiou tak, aby sa zároveň splnil aj zámer znížiť o 80 % emisie skleníkových plynov do uvedeného roku 2050?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(17. mája 2013)

EÚ sa zaviazala znížiť do roku 2050 emisie skleníkových plynov v porovnaní s rokom 1990 o 80 – 95 % v súvislosti s nevyhnutným znížením zo strany rozvinutých krajín ako skupiny ([1]). Plán prechodu na konkurencieschopné nízkouhlíkové hospodárstvo v roku 2050 ([2]) predstavuje plán možných opatrení do roku 2050, ktoré by EÚ umožnili dosiahnuť zníženie emisií skleníkových plynov o 80 až 95 % v zmysle odsúhlaseného cieľa. Komisia vo svojom Pláne postupu v energetike do roku 2050 ([3]) skúma výzvy súvisiace s cieľom eliminácie emisií uhlíka a súčasne zabezpečuje dodávky energie a konkurencieschopnosť.

Analýza sa opiera o ilustračné scenáre vytvorené rôznou kombináciou štyroch hlavných spôsobov eliminácie emisií uhlíka (energetická účinnosť, obnoviteľné zdroje energie, jadrová energia a zachytávanie a ukladanie oxidu uhličitého). Vykonaná analýza scenárov má charakter názorného príkladu a skúma vplyvy, výzvy a možnosti modernizácie energetického systému, poukazuje však jasne na súbor možností bez negatívnych dôsledkov („no regrets“) na nasledujúce roky.

Jedným z kľúčových prínosov Plánu postupu v energetike do roku 2050 a plánu prechodu na nízkouhlíkové hospodárstvo je ten, že eliminácia emisií uhlíka v energetickom systéme je technicky a ekonomicky uskutočniteľná. Všetky scenáre eliminácie emisií uhlíka okrem toho umožnia dosiahnuť cieľ zníženia emisií. Tieto scenáre poukazujú na veľký posun smerom ku kapitálovým investíciám do nízkouhlíkových technológií v rôznych sektoroch, ktoré budú časom a v závislosti od prevládajúcich cien fosílnych palív vyvážené úsporami nákladov na fosílne palivá.

([1]) Európska Rada, október 2009.
([2]) KOM(2011) 112, 8. marca.
([3]) KOM(2011) 885 v konečnom znení.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003631/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Energy in the European Union in the future

In December 2011, the European Commission submitted a plan for a low-carbon economy by 2050, setting out a number of scenarios for future energy supply structures in Europe in a way that would make it possible to fulfil the goal of reduced emissions. A greater share of renewable energy and improved energy efficiency represent key aspects of the transition to a low carbon energy system. It will be necessary to restrict the use of oil and coal substantially, since these are highly polluting fuels.

Is it realistic to follow the plan submitted by the Commission in a way that will also fulfil the planned 80% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The EU is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050, in the context of necessary reductions by developed countries as a group ([1]). The Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 ([2]) presents a Roadmap for possible action up to 2050 which could enable the EU to deliver greenhouse gas reductions in line with the 80 to 95% target agreed. In the Energy Roadmap 2050 ([3]) the Commission explores the challenges posed by delivering the EU's decarbonisation objective while at the same time ensuring security of energy supply and competitiveness.

The analysis is based on illustrative scenarios, created by combining the four main decarbonisation routes (energy efficiency, renewables, nuclear and CCS) in different ways. The scenario analysis undertaken is of an illustrative nature, examining the impacts, challenges and opportunities of possible ways of modernizing the energy system, but clearly shows a set of 'no regrets' options for the coming years.

One of the key outcomes of the Energy Roadmap 2050 and the Low Carbon Roadmap is that decarbonisation of the energy system is both technically and economically feasible. Moreover, all decarbonisation scenarios enable the achievement of the emission reduction target. Such scenarios do show a major shift towards 'low carbon' capital investments in the different sectors, which over time, and dependent on prevailing fossil fuel prices, are balanced by fossil fuel cost savings.

([1]) European Council, October 2009.
([2]) COM(2011)112, 8 March.
([3]) COM(2011)885, final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003632/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Lepšia ochrana pred látkami spôsobujúcimi hormonálne poruchy

V ostatných dvoch desiatkach rokov celosvetovo prudko vzrástol počet ochorení súvisiacich s hormonálnymi poruchami. Zdravé fungovanie endokrinného systému výrazne narúšajú napríklad rôzne chemikálie, steroidné hormóny, pesticídy, dioxíny či hormonálne lieky na liečbu rakoviny.

Je nesmierne dôležité nastoliť opatrenia na ochranu predovšetkým detí, mladých ľudí a tehotných žien. Zvažuje Komisia do súčasnej platnej legislatívy zaviesť metódy testovania na odhalenie prítomnosti týchto látok?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(17. mája 2013)

Ako sa uvádza v odpovedi na otázku E-002081/2013, Komisia v súčasnosti posudzuje stratégiu Spoločenstva týkajúcu sa endokrinných disruptorov, aby zhodnotila pokrok dosiahnutý vo vede a zmeny v právnych predpisoch od jej prijatia v roku 1999.

Toto posúdenie sa zameria aj na otázky, ktoré nastolila pani poslankyňa, keďže vhodné a citlivé metódy testovania na zistenie vlastností narušujúcich endokrinný systém sú predpokladom identifikácie endokrinných disruptorov a ochrany ľudského zdravia, ako aj životného prostredia, pred pôsobením týchto látok.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003632/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Better protection against substances that cause hormonal disorders

In the past two decades, there has been a sharp rise worldwide in the number of diseases related to hormonal disorders. The healthy functioning of the endocrine system is seriously disrupted by, for example, various chemicals, steroid hormones, pesticides, dioxins and hormonal drugs for the treatment of cancer.

It is extremely important to implement measures for the protection, in particular, of children, young people and pregnant women. Is the Commission considering the introduction into current legislation of testing methods for the detection of the presence of these substances?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

As stated in the reply to Question E-002081/2013 the Commission is currently reviewing the Community Strategy for Endocrine Disruptors to reflect the progress achieved in science and changes in legislative framework since its adoption in 1999.

The review will also look into the issues raised by the Honourable Member, as adequate and sensitive test methods for detecting endocrine disrupting properties are a prerequisite of identifying endocrine disruptors and for protection of human health, as well as the environment from exposure to these substances.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003633/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Európska obrana a viac spolupráce

Poslanci v parlamentnom podvýbore pre obranu vyjadrili obavy v súvislosti s rozpočtom na obranu, ohrozením suverenity a možnou duplicitou činností Únie s NATO. Generálporučík Ton van Osch vyzval na vytvorenie tzv. ozbrojeného krídla Európy. Podľa jeho ďalších slov však zámerom nie je akási spoločná európska armáda. Ide len o vyčlenenie dostatočných kapacít pre operácie Európskej únie.

Aké je v tejto súvislosti stanovisko Komisie?

Akým spôsobom vie, takpovediac, ustrážiť, aby v skutočnosti naozaj neprichádzalo k zdvojeniu činností Európskej únie a NATO?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(21. mája 2013)

Generálporučík Ton van Osch nevyzval na vytvorenie ozbrojeného krídla Európy, ale poukazoval na komplexný prístup ku krízovému riadeniu, v rámci ktorého by EÚ mohla využívať všetky svoje nástroje – tak civilné, ako aj vojenské. Na plné využitie tohto prístupu potrebuje EÚ okrem iného primeranú kapacitu v oblasti vojenského plánovania prispôsobenú úrovni jej ambícií, ako aj zosúladenie vojenského plánovania s civilným tak, aby smerovali k spoločným politickým cieľom. Generálporučík takisto spomenul zásadu, podľa ktorej činnosť EÚ v tejto oblasti nemá byť duplicitou činnosti Organizácie Severoatlantickej zmluvy (NATO), či už ide o operácie, alebo rozvoj vojenskej spôsobilosti.

Hlavný štáb NATO a Vojenský štáb EÚ môžu organizovať neformálne koordinačné pracovné stretnutia svojich pracovníkov. Vojenský štáb EÚ a Európska obranná agentúra (EDA) napomáhajú účinný rozvoj vojenskej spôsobilosti členských štátov, ale tieto spôsobilosti budú naďalej patriť členským štátom a tieto štáty si zachovajú zvrchované právo rozhodovať o ich použití. Môžu ich použiť v rámci EÚ, ale aj v rámci NATO alebo inej organizácie. Dobrým príkladom je existujúce európske velenie leteckej dopravy, ktoré môže využívať Európska únia, NATO a ďalší, podľa rozhodnutia zúčastnených členských štátov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003633/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: European defence and greater cooperation

In the parliamentary Subcommittee on Security and Defence, MEPs expressed concerns about the defence budget, threats to sovereignty and the possible duplication of EU and NATO activities. Lieutenant General Ton van Osch called for the creation a European 'military wing'. He went on to say, however, that the aim was not some kind of common European army. It was simply a matter of allocating sufficient capacities for EU operations.

What is the Commission's opinion in this regard?

How can it actually guard against the duplication of EU and NATO activities?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Lieutenant General Ton van Osch did not call for the creation of a European 'military wing'. He referred to the Comprehensive Approach to crisis management in which the EU can make use of all its instruments, both civilian and military. In order to make full use of this approach the EU needs, amongst other things, a modest military planning capacity adjusted to its ambition and the need to synchronise military with civilian planning towards common political objectives. He also spoke about the principle that the EU does not wish to duplicate the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO); neither in operations, nor in military capability development.

NATO Headquarters and the EU Military Staff are allowed to have informal coordinative staff to staff meetings. The EU Military Staff and the European Defence Agency (EDA) facilitate efficient military capability development of Member States but Member States will continue to own these capabilities and keep the sovereign right to decide on how to use these. This can be under the EU, but also under NATO or other organisations. A good example is the existing European Air Transport Command, that can be used for EU, for NATO and others and is decided upon by the participating Member States.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003634/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Sloboda výskumu a ľudská dôstojnosť

Charta základných práv Európske únie zaručuje slobodný výskum, no zároveň sa zasadzuje aj za ochranu ľudskej dôstojnosti. Napríklad výskum spojený s využitím embryonálnych kmeňových buniek však tieto dva koncepty akoby stavia proti sebe. Otázky bioetiky sú síce v značnej miere doménou členských štátov, nezriedka však i európske inštitúcie sú oslovované v zmysle zaujatia stanoviska k tejto problematike. Najmä ak hovoríme o statuse ľudského embrya.

Aké je stanovisko Komisie k danej problematike, resp. je možné legislatívne zreteľnejšie zastrešiť otázky vzťahujúce sa práve na slobodu výskumu vs. hájenie práva na ľudskú dôstojnosť?

Ako možno „oddeliť" tieto koncepty, aby nedochádzalo k porušovaniu ani jedného z nich?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(27. mája 2013)

Charta základných práv Európskej únie je právne záväzná od nadobudnutia platnosti Lisabonskej zmluvy. Podľa jej článku 51 ods. 1 je charta určená pre inštitúcie, orgány, úrady a agentúry Únie a na členské štáty sa uplatňuje vtedy, ak vykonávajú právo Únie. Komisia zohľadňuje základné práva pri vzniku, koncipovaní a rozvoji politík EÚ. Pri každom návrhu posudzuje jeho vplyv na základné práva. Komisia takisto sleduje dodržiavanie charty členskými štátmi pri vykonávaní práva EÚ.

Európske pravidlá pre používanie kmeňových buniek ako aj ich implementácia členskými štátmi do vnútroštátneho práva musia preto byť v súlade s právami zaručenými chartou ([1]). Treba podčiarknuť, že v prípade opatrenia, ktoré má vplyv na viacero základných práv, toto opatrenie musí rešpektovať všetky dotknuté základné práva. V takomto prípade je teda potrebné vykonať posúdenie vplyvu právneho textu na všetky základné práva, ktoré by návrh mohol ovplyvniť, a posúdenie toho, či obmedzenie jedného základného práva môže byť opodstatnené vykonávaním iného základného práva, nie je postačujúce.

Je potrebné poznamenať, že EÚ nemá žiadnu osobitnú právomoc na stanovenie právneho rámca v členských štátoch v oblasti výskumu embryonálnych kmeňových buniek. Prístup jednotlivých členských štátov k výskumu kmeňových buniek sa značne líši. Vo veľkej miere ich prístup závisí od toho, aké právne postavenie má ľudské embryo v danom členskom štáte.

([1]) Detailnejšie informácie o pravidlách pre používanie kmeňových buniek môžete nájsť v odpovedi na písomnú otázku E-3085/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003634/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Freedom of research and human dignity

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union guarantees freedom of research, but it also enshrines the protection of human dignity. However, research relating to the use of embryonic stem cells, for example, sets these two concepts against each other. Although questions relating to bioethics are largely the domain of the Member States, European institutions are often also called upon to adopt a position on the issue. This is particularly the case where the status of the human embryo is concerned.

What is the Commission's opinion on the issue? Is it possible to create a clearer legislative framework covering the issues relating to the right to freedom of research as well as the defence of the right to human dignity?

How can these concepts be 'decoupled' in order to avoid the violation of either?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU became legally binding with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. According to its Article 51(1), the Charter is addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union and applies to Member States when they are implementing EC law. The Commission takes fundamental rights considerations into account in the inception, conception and development of EU policies. It assesses the impact of each of its proposals on fundamental rights. The Commission also observes compliance of Member States with the Charter when they implement EC law.

European rules governing the use of stem cells as well as their implementation by Member States into their national law therefore have to comply with the rights guaranteed by the Charter ([1]). In the case of a measure which has an impact on several fundamental rights, it needs to be stressed that this measure must respect all the fundamental rights concerned. In this case, the assessment of the impact of a legal text on a fundamental right has therefore to be done for each fundamental right that might be affected and not by assessing whether the restriction of one fundamental right can be justified by another fundamental right.

It should be noted that there is no specific EU competence to determine the legal framework for embryonic stem cells research in the Member States. The approach to stem cells research varies considerably between Member States. It depends mainly on the legal status of the human embryo in the legislation of each Member State.

([1]) For more detailed information about the rules governing the use of stem cells, see reply to Written Question E-3085/13.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003635/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Výber daní verzus potreby daňovníka

Podľa odhadov Európskej komisie Únia ročne prichádza o takmer bilión eur v dôsledku daňových podvodov. Je však potrebné veľmi striktne rozlišovať medzi daňovými únikmi a vyhýbaním sa plateniu daní. Daňové úniky sú snahy jednotlivcov či firiem neplatiť dane využívajúc nelegálne nástroje. Vyhýbanie sa plateniu daní vzniká zákonným využívaním daňového režimu, keď sa jednotlivci či firmy zákonným spôsobom snažia znížiť výšku svojich daní.

Pokiaľ chceme posilniť daňové predpisy, je zároveň nevyhnutné prihliadať i na potreby daňovníka. V akčnom pláne Komisie vzťahujúcom sa na túto problematiku zohrávajú dôležitú úlohu informačné technológie. Ako konkrétne mieni Komisia ich prostredníctvom bojovať proti daňovým podvodníkom?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(7. mája 2013)

Komisia súhlasí so skutočnosťou, že je dôležité prihliadať na potreby daňovníkov. Vo svojom akčnom pláne ([1]) Komisia navrhuje opatrenia na tento účel, a to vrátane zriadenia európskeho kódexu daňovníka, v ktorom sa stanovia osvedčené postupy na zlepšenie spolupráce a dôvery medzi daňovými správami a daňovníkmi, na zaistenie väčšej transparentnosti, pokiaľ ide o práva a povinnosti daňovníkov, a na podporenie prístupu orientovaného na služby. Na získanie príspevkov od všetkých zainteresovaných strán s cieľom vypracovať komplexný a zároveň vyrovnaný prehľad práv a povinností daňovníkov a daňových správ sa 25. februára 2013 začala verejná konzultácia.

Informačné technológie zohrávajú v akčnom pláne rozhodujúcu úlohu, pričom cieľom je jednak zracionalizovať nástroje IT, a jednak dosiahnuť maximálny úžitok z využívania takýchto nástrojov v boji proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom. Komisia v súčasnosti analyzuje spôsoby, akými by sa informačné technológie dali využívať na zaistenie účinných a nákladovo efektívnych systémov. V tomto procese Komisia hodlá zohrávať aktívnu úlohu s cieľom zabezpečiť medzi všetkými aktérmi na úrovni EÚ koordinovaný prístup.

([1]) COM(2012) 722.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003635/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Tax collection versus the needs of the taxpayer

According to Commission estimates, the EU loses almost EUR 1 billion a year through tax fraud. However, a very firm distinction should be made between tax evasion and tax avoidance. Tax evasion is an attempt by an individual or a company not to pay taxes, using illegal instruments. Tax avoidance is the lawful use of the tax system by an individual or a company seeking a lawful reduction in tax amounts.

If we wish to strengthen tax regulations, we will also have to take the needs of the taxpayer into account. Information technologies play an important role in the Commission's action plan for addressing this issue. How, specifically, does the Commission intend to use them to combat tax fraud?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission agrees on the importance of taking into account the needs of taxpayers. In its Action Plan ([1]), the Commission proposes such measures including establishing a European Taxpayer's Code which will set out best practices for enhancing cooperation, trust and confidence between tax administrations and taxpayers, for ensuring greater transparency on the rights and obligations of taxpayers, and encouraging a service-oriented approach. A public consultation was launched on 25.2.2013 to collect contributions from all stakeholders in order to build a comprehensive yet balanced overview of the rights and obligations of taxpayers and tax administrations.

Information technologies play a key role in the action plan and the objective is both to rationalise IT instruments and to reap the maximum benefits from such instruments in the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion. The Commission is analysing how it can build on information technologies in order to ensure effective and cost-efficient systems. The Commission intends to play an active role in these developments to ensure a coordinated vision among all actors at EU level.

([1]) COM(2012)722.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003636/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Efektívna podpora pre najchudobnejších

Až 116 miliónov Európanov v súčasnosti žije na hranici chudoby. Pre zmiernenie tejto ťažkej a nelichotivej situácie sa rozpočet fondu na pomoc najchudobnejším v Európskej únii podľa predbežných odhadov mal na obdobie rokov 2014 až 2020 pohybovať na úrovni dva a pol miliardy EUR. Finančné prostriedky by mali slúžiť na zaistenie potravín, oblečenia a ďalších nevyhnutných veci pre ľudí bez domova a deti zo sociálne slabých pomerov.

Akým spôsobom chce Komisia dohliadať na to, aby finančné prostriedky boli na spomenuté účely prerozdeľované maximálne efektívne?

Je možné sa zaručiť, že pomoc bude poskytovaná presne tým, čo to potrebujú?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(29. mája 2013)

Fond európskej pomoci pre najodkázanejšie osoby (FEAD) bude na základe návrhu Komisie fungovať formou zdieľaného hospodárenia. Tento spôsob realizácie umožňuje členským štátom prispôsobiť vykonávanie programov miestnym potrebám, ako aj inštitucionálnej a administratívnej štruktúre tej ktorej krajiny. Okrem toho Komisia začlenila do návrhu nariadenia významný počet prvkov, ktorých cieľom je zjednodušenie, hlavne pre organizácie zaisťujúce distribúciu pomoci, a to najmä cestou systematického používania paušálneho financovania. Flexibilita a zjednodušenie spoločne prispejú k čo najväčšej efektívnosti.

Komisia navrhuje ponechať identifikáciu najodkázanejších osôb oprávnených čerpať z FEAD na členských štátoch podľa ich vlastného uváženia. Členské štáty sú najlepšie schopné určiť, kto najviac potrebuje pomoc spolufinancovanú prostredníctvom FEAD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003636/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Effective support for the poorest

At present, up to 116 million Europeans are living at the poverty threshold. To alleviate this difficult and unfavourable situation, the budget for the fund to help the poorest in the European Union will, according to preliminary estimates, be around EUR 2.5 billion for the 2014-2020 period. The financial resources should be used to provide food, clothing and other necessities to homeless people and children from deprived backgrounds.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the funding is redistributed for these purposes as effectively as possible?

Is it possible to guarantee that help will be given to precisely those people who need it?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(29 mai 2013)

Le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD), tel que proposé par la Commission, sera mis en œuvre dans le cadre de la gestion partagée. Cette modalité de mise en œuvre permet aux États membres d'adapter l'exécution des programmes aux besoins de terrain ainsi qu'aux structures institutionnelles et administratives existant dans chaque pays. En outre, la Commission a introduit dans la proposition de règlement un nombre significatif d'éléments visant à une simplification, en particulier pour les organisations qui assureront la distribution de l'aide, avec notamment l'utilisation systématique de taux forfaitaires. Flexibilité et simplification contribueront de concert à une efficacité la plus grande possible.

La Commission propose que l'identification des personnes les plus démunies qui bénéficieraient du FEAD soit laissée à l'appréciation des États membres qui sont les mieux à même d'identifier les personnes qui ont le plus besoin de l'assistance cofinancée par le FEAD.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003637/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Dlhodobý rozpočet Európskej únie 2014 – 2020

Členské štáty únie nezohľadnili výzvu Európskeho parlamentu zamerať rozpočet Únie na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020 na podporu rastu. Naopak, prvýkrát vôbec bol odsúhlasený menší rozpočet v porovnaní s predchádzajúcim obdobím. Parlament odmieta toto skresanie financií a žiada, aby bol rozpočet pružnejší.

Je v kompetencii Komisie dohliadnuť na skutočnosť, aby členské štáty boli schopné pokryť svoje deficity za rok 2012, príp. 2013 a aby sa v tomto zmysle nový rozpočtový cyklus počnúc rokom 2014 začal „nanovo“?

Odpoveď pána Lewandowského v mene Komisie
(14. mája 2013)

Komisia otázku chápe vo vzťahu k oprávneným žiadostiam o platbu ku koncu roka 2012, prípadne ku koncu roka 2013.

Dňa 27. marca 2013 Komisia prijala návrh opravného rozpočtu (NOR) 2/2013 s cieľom nepreťažiť nový rozpočtový cyklus začínajúci v roku 2014 nevyrovnanými žiadosťami o platbu z predchádzajúceho obdobia. Na základe hĺbkovej analýzy situácie Komisia prostredníctvom tohto návrhu požiadala o dodatočné zdroje, ktoré Únia potrebuje v roku 2013. NOR 2/2013 je v súlade s vyhláseniami, na ktorých sa dohodli Rada, Komisia a Parlament v rámci prijímania rozpočtu na rok 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003637/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Long-term budget of the European Union 2014-2020

The Member States have not taken into account Parliament's call for the EU budget for the period 2014-2020 to focus on the promotion of growth. On the contrary, for the first time ever, a smaller budget compared to the preceding period was approved. Parliament rejects this reduction of funds and asks that the budget be more flexible.

Is it within the Commission's powers to ensure that the Member States are able to cover their deficits for 2012 or 2013 so that, in this sense, the new budgetary cycle beginning in 2014 can start 'afresh'?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission understands that the question relates to the payment of eligible payment claims at the end of 2012 and possibly at the end of 2013.

In order not to burden excessively the new budgetary cycle beginning in 2014 with pending payment claims from the previous period, the Commission adopted Draft Amending Budget (DAB) 2/2013 on 27 March 2013. Through this proposal and after a detailed analysis of the situation, the Commission requested the additional resources the Union needs in 2013. This DAB 2/2013 is conformant to the declarations agreed between Council, Commission and Parliament in the framework of the adoption of budget 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003638/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28. marca 2013)

Vec: Využívanie konania vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu

Európske konanie vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu je finančne pomerne nenáročnou alternatívou a jednoduchým spôsobom riešenia cezhraničných sporov nepresahujúcich dve tisíc eur. Podľa záverov správy Siete európskych spotrebiteľských centier však nie je všeobecne známe. I preto, že nie je v dostatočnom povedomí občanov, nie je toto konanie využívané príliš často.

Je v kompetencii a možnostiach Komisie tento stav napraviť?

Ak áno, kde vidí Komisia možnosti ako túto alternatívu k existujúcim konaniam podľa práva členských štátov dostať viac do povedomia európskych občanov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

V snahe podporiť využívanie európskeho konania vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu Komisia sprístupnila na Európskom justičnom portáli dynamický viacjazyčný formulár. Komisia vypracovala spolu s Európskou justičnou sieťou pre občianske a obchodné veci praktickú príručku pre právnickú obec a dokončuje príručku pre spotrebiteľov. Príručky budú uverejnené a spropagované túto jeseň. Mali by prispieť k zvýšeniu povedomia, ako aj úrovne znalostí o tomto konaní, a podporiť tak jeho širšie využívanie.

Komisia popri svojich propagačných činnostiach financuje aj vonkajšie opatrenia. Napríklad užšia výzva na predkladanie návrhov na rok 2013 určená pre európske spotrebiteľské centrá zahŕňa poskytovanie poradenstva o konaní vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu ako činnosť spĺňajúcu podmienky na spolufinancovanie. Komisia financovala aj projekt COJEF realizovaný Európskou organizáciou spotrebiteľov BEUC, ktorý bol zameraný na európske konanie vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu ako nástroj na presadzovanie práv spotrebiteľov.

Komisia má okrem toho v úmysle prijať koncom roka 2013 správu o zavádzaní európskeho konania vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu do praxe. Ak sa uzná za vhodné, správu by mohol sprevádzať legislatívny návrh, vďaka ktorému by sa ešte viac uľahčilo využívanie tohto konania.

Komisia okrem týchto opatrení vykonala v decembri 2012 osobitný prieskum Eurobarometer zameraný na európske konanie vo veciach s nízkou hodnotou sporu. Výsledky tohto prieskumu sú dostupné na:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_399_380_en.htm#395.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003638/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Using the small claims procedure

The European Small Claims Procedure is a relatively inexpensive alternative, and a simple way of resolving cross-border disputes not exceeding EUR 2 000. According to the findings of a report from the European Consumers Centres Network, however, it is not widely known. As citizens are not sufficiently aware of it, the procedure is not used very often.

Is it within the competence of the Commission to remedy this situation and is it able to do so?

If so, where does the Commission see possibilities for making European citizens more aware of this alternative to existing procedures under the national law of the Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

In order to encourage the use of the European Small Claims Procedure, the Commission has made available multilingual dynamic forms in the European e-Justice Portal. The Commission, together with the European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters elaborated a practice guide for the judiciary and legal practitioners and is finalising a consumer guide. The guides will be published and advertised this autumn. They should raise awareness and increase knowledge thus contributing to greater use of the procedure.

In addition to its promotional activities, the Commission also funds external actions. For instance, the restricted call for proposals directed to the European Consumer Centres for the year 2013 includes the provision of advice in relation to the European Small Claims Procedure as eligible for co-financing. The Commission also financed the COJEF project carried out by European consumer Organisation BEUC, which covered the European small claims procedure as a tool for enforcement of consumer rights.

Finally, by the end of 2013 the Commission intends to adopt a report on the practical implementation of the European small claims procedure, which if deemed useful, may be accompanied by a legislative proposal further facilitating the use of the procedure.

In addition to these actions, in December 2012 the Commission carried out a special Eurobarometer survey devoted to European Small Claims Procedure, the results of which are available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_399_380_en.htm#395

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003639/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Contabilidad presupuestaria en el Estado español

Un trabajo académico afirma con datos que el Gobierno español ha conseguido aumentar sus ingresos tributarios en el año 2012 de forma extraordinaria y artificial debido, principalmente, al aumento de los pagos fraccionados del impuesto de sociedades y al retraso de devoluciones de IVA y Sociedades. Es decir, gracias a un juego contable aunque formalmente cumple con la normativa de Eurostat. Estas medidas han conseguido aumentar la recaudación en 2012 por valor de unos 8 000 millones. Estos académicos consideran también que como consecuencia de ello es posible que se produzca una caída equivalente en la recaudación en el año 2013 ([1]).

Los efectos de esta caída en la recaudación ya se han dejando notar. En enero de 2013, el déficit del Estado ha sido del 1,2 %, siendo el objetivo conjunto con la seguridad social para 2013 del 3,8 %. La caída en la recaudación por el impuesto de sociedades se calcula que se reducirá por valor de 2 800 millones en 2013.

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que Eurostat debería asegurar que el constante retraso en la devolución no se convierta en una estrategia de contabilidad presupuestaria en el Estado español?

2. ¿Tendrá en cuenta estos datos la Comisión en sus recomendaciones para el cumplimiento del déficit del 2013 del Estado español?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que esta práctica puede representar un freno para el crecimiento de la economía española?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Con arreglo al sistema de cuentas nacionales, los impuestos deben registrarse según el principio del devengo. Excepcionalmente, pueden considerarse los registros de caja como sustitutos de los datos de devengo. Hasta ahora, las devoluciones de impuestos se habían venido registrando en la contabilidad de caja en España. Sin embargo, debido al cambio en las características de las devoluciones, Eurostat ha debatido la cuestión con las autoridades españolas. En este contexto, España ha cambiado los registros de caja por los correspondientes al principio del devengo en la notificación de datos de 2012 efectuada en abril de 2013. Dichos datos se han analizado en el contexto de la notificación de primavera del procedimiento de déficit excesivo. Eurostat publicó por primera vez el 22 de abril de 2013 los datos relativos a España correspondientes a 2012.

1. Debido al reciente cambio de la contabilidad de caja a la del principio de devengo en el método de registro de las devoluciones de impuestos, el efecto del retraso en la devolución de impuestos de 2012/13 se neutralizó en la notificación de abril de 2013 (véase más arriba). El registro por el principio de devengo también se utilizará para notificaciones futuras.

2. Estos datos se tendrán en cuenta en las previsiones de primavera de los servicios de la Comisión para 2013 (que se publicarán a principios de mayo), así como en futuras recomendaciones políticas.

3. El impacto en el crecimiento económico de España debería ser nulo o muy próximo a cero.

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=29340

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003639/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Budgetary accounts in Spain

An academic paper has confirmed with data that the Spanish Government has managed to increase its tax revenue in 2012 in an extraordinary and artificial way, mainly through an increase in split business tax payments and delayed VAT and business tax refunds. This is thanks to an accounting trick which nonetheless formally complies with Eurostat legislation. With these methods, the Spanish Government has managed to increase the 2012 tax revenue by some EUR 8 billion. Academics also believe that, as a result, there could be an equivalent decrease in tax revenue in 2013 ([1]).

The effects of this decrease in tax revenue have yet to be established. In January 2013, the Spanish Government had a deficit of 1.2%, with a 2013 objective of 3.8%, together with social security. It has been calculated that business tax revenue will decrease by EUR 2.8 billion in 2013.

1. Does the Commission believe that Eurostat should ensure that this constant delay in tax refunds does not become one of Spain's budgetary account strategies?

2. Will the Commission take this data into account in its recommendations for Spain's compliance with its 2013 deficit?

3. Does the Commission believe that this practice could delay the growth of Spain's economy?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

According to National Accounts, taxes should be recorded on an accrual basis. Exceptionally cash recording may be considered as a proxy for accruals. Until now, tax refunds were recorded on a cash basis in Spain. However, due to change in the pattern of the refunds, Eurostat has been discussing the issue with the Spanish authorities. In this context Spain has changed the cash recording to accrual in the April 2013 notification for the 2012 data. The data have been analysed in the context of the spring EDP notification. Eurostat published the 2012 data for Spain on 22 April 2013 for the first time.

1. Due to the recent change in the method of recording of tax refunds from cash to accrual, the effect of the delay in the tax refunds 2012/2013 was neutralized in the April 2013 notification (see above). Accrual recording will also be used for future notifications.

2. These data will be taken into account in the Commission services' 2013 spring forecasts (to be published in early May) and future policy recommendations.

3. The impact on Spain's economic growth should be nil or very close to nil.

([1]) http://www.fedeablogs.net/economia/?p=29340.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003642/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος ραγδαίας αύξησης των «φτωχών εργαζομένων» στην Ελλάδα από την επέκταση των ευέλικτων μορφών απασχόλησης

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα δημοσιοποιημένα στοιχεία του Σώματος Επιθεώρησης Εργασίας (Σ.ΕΠ.Ε.) για την κατάσταση στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας, προκύπτει ότι το 45% των προσλήψεων για το 2012 αφορά ευέλικτες μορφές απασχόλησης. Η αμοιβή που προβλέπεται είτε για την μερική απασχόληση, είτε για άλλες μορφές υποαπασχόλησης, υπολείπεται σημαντικά του εθνικού ορίου φτώχειας με τη ραγδαία επέκτασή τους να διαμορφώνει συνθήκες περαιτέρω αύξησης του φαινομένου των «φτωχών εργαζομένων», που ήδη παρουσιάζεται ιδιαίτερα οξυμένο στην Ελλάδα, ως συνέπεια των μεγάλων μειώσεων που έχουν συντελεστεί στις αποδοχές των ελλήνων εργαζομένων.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και με βάση τους διακηρυγμένους ευρωπαϊκούς στόχους, τόσο για δραστικό περιορισμό του φαινομένου των «φτωχών εργαζομένων», όσο και για την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας συνολικότερα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για το ποσοστό της «ευελιξίας» στις προσλήψεις που πραγματοποιήθηκαν στα κράτη μέλη το 2012;

— Πόσο συμβατή μπορεί να είναι η επέκταση των ευέλικτων μορφών απασχόλησης με την κοινωνική στοχοθεσία της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής «ΕΕ 2020», όταν αυτές προβλέπουν αμοιβές σημαντικά χαμηλότερες από το εθνικό όριο φτώχειας, όπως αυτό καθορίζεται από τη Eurostat;

— Το φαινόμενο των «φτωχών εργαζομένων» που απασχολεί το σύνολο της Ένωσης είναι συχνότερο στις ευέλικτες μορφές ή στην πλήρη απασχόληση;

— Υπάρχουν στοιχεία που να καταδεικνύουν αν πράγματι η flexicurity αποτελεί μεταβατικό στάδιο για την απόκτηση εμπειρίας και την εύρεση ποιοτικής και πλήρους απασχόλησης; Σε τι ποσοστό οι ευέλικτες μορφές εργασίας αποτελούν επιλογή του εργαζομένου;

— Πιστεύει ότι, δεδομένων των μεταρρυθμίσεων του εργασιακού νομικού πλαισίου στα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη, υπάρχει ανάγκη επαναπροσδιορισμού των αρχών της flexicurity προκειμένου να διασφαλίζεται, αφενός, η ευελιξία και, αφετέρου, η ασφάλεια;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τις εξελίξεις στην προσωρινή εργασία και στη φτώχεια στην εργασία στην Ευρώπη ([1]). Η Eurostat παρέχει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ποσοστό των προσωρινά εργαζομένων ([2]), αλλά τα στοιχεία σχετικά με τις προσλήψεις είναι διαθέσιμα μόνο από εθνικές πηγές. Υπάρχουν σημαντικές διαφορές μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, επίσης αναφορικά με το ποσοστό των εργαζομένων που δεν επέλεξαν οικειοθελώς το προσωρινό καθεστώς, καθώς επίσης και το ποσοστό μετάβασης σε μόνιμες θέσεις εργασίας ([3]). Ενώ η εργασία με προσωρινή σύμβαση αυξάνει την έκθεση στον κίνδυνο φτώχιας στην εργασία, διαδραματίζουν σχετικό ρόλο και άλλοι παράγοντες, όπως η σύνθεση του νοικοκυριού ([4]).

Η Επιτροπή συνιστά τη μείωση του κατακερματισμού και της αδήλωτης εργασίας μέσω μεταρρυθμίσεων που να στοχεύουν στη μείωση των διαφορών όσον αφορά την προστασία μεταξύ μόνιμα και προσωρινά εργαζομένων ([5]). Στη δέσμη μέτρων για την απασχόληση, η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι η υπό εξέλιξη συζήτηση σχετικά με την ευελιξία με ασφάλεια (flexicurity) επέτρεψε την εξεύρεση των αναγκαίων μέτρων στο πλαίσιο της κρίσης και τη διαπίστωση ότι θα πρέπει να ληφθούν περαιτέρω μέτρα ώστε να εξασφαλιστούν οι μεταβάσεις στην αγορά εργασίας και στις αγορές εργασίας χωρίς αποκλεισμούς. Η Επιτροπή επιμένει σε μέτρα που θα αυξήσουν την εσωτερική ευελιξία, θα στηρίξουν τις μεταβάσεις μεταξύ διαφορετικών θέσεων εργασίας και εκτός της απασχόλησης και θα εξισώνουν τα κοινωνικά δικαιώματα και τα δικαιώματα προστασίας της απασχόλησης για όλους τους τύπους συμβάσεων εργασίας ([6]).

([1]) Απασχόληση και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη στην Ευρώπη 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7315
([2]) Eurostat, (lfsa_etpga).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/employment_protection_legislation.pdf
([4]) Απασχόληση και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη στην Ευρώπη 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6176
([5]) Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, «Ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2013» (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf).
([6]) Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, «Στοχεύοντας σε μια ανάκαμψη με άφθονες θέσεις απασχόλησης», COM(2012)173 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003642/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Risk of a sharp increase in the 'working poor' in Greece due to a rise in flexible forms of employment

According to recent data on the state of the Greek labour market published by the Labour Inspectorate, it appears that 45% of recruitment in 2012 concerned flexible forms of employment. The salaries for part-time employment or other forms of underemployment fall well below the national poverty threshold and the rapid rise in these types of jobs create conditions which further increase the problem of the 'working poor', which is already a particularly acute problem in Greece as a result of the large reductions made to the salaries of Greek workers.

In this context and given stated EU targets on drastically reducing the problem of the 'working poor' and on combating poverty as a whole, will the Commission answer the following:

— Does it have statistics on the amount of 'flexibility' in recruitment carried out in the Member States in 2012?

— How compatible can a rise in flexible forms of working be with the social objective of the Europe 2020 strategy when they involve salaries which fall well below the national poverty threshold as defined by Eurostat?

— Is the problem of the 'working poor', which is affecting the whole of the EU, more prevalent in flexible forms of employment or full-time employment?

— Are there any data which prove that flexicurity is really a transitional phase for acquiring experience and finding high-quality, full time employment? What percentage of employees choose flexible forms of work?

— Does the Commission believe, given the reforms made to the legal framework governing employment in most Member States, that the principles of flexicurity need to be redefined in order to guarantee both flexibility and security?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission monitors developments in temporary work and in-work poverty in Europe ([1]). Eurostat provides data about the share of temporary workers ([2]), but recruitment data are only available from national sources. There are salient differences across the Member States, also as regards to the share of involuntary temporary workers and the rate of transitions to permanent jobs ([3]). Whereas holding a temporary contract augments exposure to in-work poverty risk, other factors such as household composition count as well ([4]).

The Commission recommends to reduce segmentation and undeclared work through reforms aimed at narrowing protection gaps between permanent and temporary workers ([5]). In its Employment Package, the Commission notes that the ongoing debate on flexicurity has enabled to identify necessary measures in the context of the crisis, and that further steps should be taken to secure labour market transitions and inclusive labour markets. The Commission insists on measures that would increase internal flexibility, sustain transitions between different jobs and out of employment, and equalise social and employment protection rights for all types of contractual arrangements ([6]).

([1]) Employment and Social Development in Europe 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7315
([2]) Eurostat, (lfsa_etpga).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/employment_protection_legislation.pdf
([4]) Employment and Social Development in Europe 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6176
([5]) European Commission, 'Annual Growth Survey 2013' (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf).
([6]) European Commission, 'Towards a Job-Rich Recovery', COM(2012) 173 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003643/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: EU action to tackle counterfeit goods

The issue of counterfeit goods and the protection of intellectual property is one of the biggest challenges that the EU faces on a daily basis. In 2011 there were more than 91 000 shipments of fake goods seized by customs officials, valued at EUR 1.2 billion. The most common goods seized were medicines, representing up to one-quarter of the total.

What action has the Commission undertaken to combat the growing problem of fake goods entering the EU market, and what specific measures have been taken in relation to fraudulent medicines?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection is a clear priority for the Commission and Member States and important initiatives have been launched to enhance Customs efforts in this area.

The existing legal framework for Customs actions ([1]) is under revision. The Commission proposal for a new Regulation concerning customs enforcement of intellectual property rights ([2]) foresees the strengthening of Customs powers and enlarges the number of intellectual property rights on which Customs can act, such as topographies of semiconductor products, utility models and trade names. It also will allow for the destruction of goods without a court order, provided that the right-holder and the holder of the goods agree.

Furthermore, a new EU Customs Action Plan (AP) to combat IPR infringements for the years 2013 to 2017 has recently been adopted by Council ([3]). This AP is intended to reinforce the capacity of Customs to implement the new rules and to focus on providing responses to major trends in trade of IPR infringing goods such as those bought over the Internet. This is complemented by international collaboration and the strengthening of cooperation with the European Observatory on infringements of IPRs and other law enforcement authorities.

With regard to medicines, Customs is particularly vigilant to ensure that imports of these goods also respect the relevant rules provided for in Directive 2001/83/EC ([4]) and cooperates with competent authorities for medicinal products in this respect.

([1]) OJ L 196/7 of 28.2.2003.
([2]) COM(2011)285 — Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning customs enforcement of intellectual property rights.
([3]) OJ C 80/1 of 19.3.2013.
([4]) OJ L 311/67 of 28.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003644/13
to the Commission
Michael Cashman (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Studies by EU companies promoting the use of a medicinal product in non-EU countries

In our previous question (E-005894/2012) we noted that:

— Some pharmaceutical companies based within the EU promote expensive brand-name pharmaceutical products under the guise of post-marketing observational studies, especially in low-income countries;

— Participating doctors may be paid to convert a person onto the newly marketed agent, with most patients remaining on the medicine after the study is over;

— These studies often do not generate any published results, which suggests that they are of a marketing rather than a scientific nature;

— As a comparison, companies based in the US do not have recourse to such practices, owing to the very strict guidelines for pharmaceutical manufacturers issued by the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, which deal with kickbacks and other illegal forms of remuneration;

— The EU directive on pharmacovigilance (post-authorisation safety studies) was amended in 2010 to state that 'studies shall not be performed where the act of conducting the study promotes the use of a medicinal product' (Directive 2010/84/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2010).

Following its answer to the above question, will the Commission consider expanding the EU legislation so as to stop European pharmaceutical companies from conducting studies which promote the use of a medicinal product in non-EU countries?

Does the Commission agree that such legislation would help to mitigate the risk of some companies conducting observational trials in non-EU countries, where they might recruit a doctor to conduct such a trial who then modifies the patient's treatment without that treatment being funded by the company?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

Post-marketing observational studies are conducted with the purpose of monitoring the safety, efficacy and the use of an authorised medicinal product within the EU. Those studies will therefore be regularly conducted where the product is authorised and used, i.e. within the EU.

EU legislation has no extraterritorial effect to the extent that it would regulate the conduct of post-marketing studies in third countries. The conduct of studies in third countries is the competence of their national competent authorities.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003645/13
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(28 martie 2013)

Subiect: Reducerea de către Comisie cu 60 de miliarde EUR a propunerilor de costuri de instalare de rețele în bandă largă

Deoarece Comisia urmează să reducă cu 60 de miliarde EUR propunerile referitoare la costurile aferente instalării de rețele în bandă largă, vor fi afectate ISA (Soluții de interoperabilitate pentru administrațiile publice europene) și MCE (mecanismul Conectarea Europei) și va fi periclitată viabilitatea proiectelor deja inițiate, ceea ce ridică problema dacă investițiile care au fost deja realizate riscă să fie compromise.

Examinează Comisia compensarea acestor reduceri din alte resurse/bugete, astfel încât să asigure viabilitatea proiectelor și a investițiilor deja realizate?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(14 mai 2013)

Trebuie remarcat faptul că Consiliul European a convenit asupra unui buget de 1 miliard EUR pentru sectorul telecomunicațiilor prin intermediul MCE în cadrul reuniunii sale din 7-8 februarie 2013, în contrast marcant cu propunerea Comisiei pentru o alocare de 9,2 miliarde de euro pentru perioada de programare 2014-2020. Decizia finală privind cadrul financiar multianual al UE încă nu a fost aprobată în mod oficial și se află în prezent în curs de examinare de către Parlamentul European.

În cazul în care acordul Consiliul European este aprobat de către autoritatea bugetară, nu există niciun plan de a compensa pierderea telecomunicațiilor MCE — de exemplu, prin transferarea fondurilor între alte linii bugetare. Aceasta va reprezenta o reducere reală în finanțarea acestor infrastructuri prin bugetul UE. Cu toate acestea, Comisia își menține angajamentul de atingere de către UE a obiectivelor Agendei digitale până în 2020 pentru rețelele în bandă largă. Sarcina revine în principal statelor membre, dar Comisia va depune toate eforturile pentru a asigura că fondurile structurale și fondurile de investiții sunt utilizate eficient în sprijinirea infrastructurii de bandă largă ori de câte ori acest lucru este necesar pentru a atinge aceste obiective.

Programul ISA va fi afectat de reducerile propuse de Consiliul European la rubrica 1, „Competitivitate pentru creștere economică și locuri de muncă”, în cazul în care acestea sunt aprobate de autoritatea bugetară. În acest caz, nu vor exista compensații de la alte linii bugetare. Pentru a nu compromite eforturile continue de a îmbunătăți interoperabilitatea dintre administrațiile publice europene, Comisia va aplica reducerile în mod proporțional în rândul proiectelor în curs de derulare. Consecința imediată a acestor reduceri va consta în întârzieri mai mari de punere în aplicare, dar existența și sustenabilitatea pe termen lung a acestora nu va fi compromisă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003645/13
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Commission's cut of EUR 60 bn on broadband installation costs proposals

Owing to the fact that the Commission is to cut EUR 60 bn on broadband installation costs proposals, ISA (Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations) and CEF (Connecting Europe Facility) will be affected and the sustainability of the projects already started will be endangered, which raises the question whether the investments that have already been made could be jeopardised.

Is the Commission considering compensating for these cuts from other resources/budgets so as to ensure the sustainability of projects and investments already made?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

It should be noted that it is the European Council that agreed upon a budget of EUR 1 Billion for the telecom sector under the CEF at its meeting of 7-8 February 2013, in sharp contrast with the Commission's proposal for an allocation of EUR 9.2 billion for the programming period 2014-2020. Final decision on the EU multi-annual financial framework has not yet been formally approved and is currently under consideration by the European Parliament.

If the European Council agreement is endorsed by the Budgetary Authority, there is no plan to compensate for the loss of CEF Telecom — e.g. by shifting funds between other budget lines. It will represent a real cut in funding such infrastructures through the EU budget. However, the Commission remains committed to the EU achieving the Digital Agenda targets for broadband by 2020. The onus therefore lies primarily with Member States but the Commission will make every effort to ensure that structural and investment funds are used efficiently — in support for broadband infrastructure wherever this is needed to achieve these targets.

The ISA programme will be impacted by the reductions proposed by the European Council in Heading 1, 'Competitiveness for growth and jobs', should they be approved by the Budgetary Authority. In that case, there will be no compensation from other budget lines. In order not to compromise ongoing efforts to improve interoperability between European public administrations, the Commission will apply the reductions in a proportional way among ongoing projects. The immediate consequence of these reductions will be increased implementation delays, but their existence and their long-term sustainability will not be compromised.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003646/13
to the Commission
Derek Vaughan (S&D) and Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Regulation of 'energy' drinks

A recent report conducted by the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) has found that consumption patterns of 'energy' drinks are especially high amongst adolescents and children — a cause for concern given their high caffeine content.

Does the Commission plan on taking any action to regulate the marketing, sale and caffeine content of these drinks in light of the EFSA report's conclusions, particularly with respect to young people?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Directive 2002/67/EC ([1]) harmonises the labelling of beverages containing caffeine. For further details the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answers given to the previous Written Questions E-000464/2010 and E-002353/2010 ([2]).

Furthermore, as a result of the concerns raised by certain Member States, the Commission has requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to assess the safety of caffeine. EFSA is to provide advice on a daily intake of caffeine, from all sources, that does not give rise to concerns about harmful effects to health, both for the general population and as appropriate, for specific subgroups of the population.

In its advice EFSA should also determine whether and the extent to which the consumption of caffeine together with other food constituents such as alcohol or substances found in 'energy drinks' could present a risk to health as a result of interactions of these constituents ([3]). The risk assessment should be finalised by the end of 2013.

([1]) OJ L 191, 19.7. 2002.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Question Number: EFSA-Q-2013-00220.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003647/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: European Social Fund contribution to UK Jobcentre Plus scheme

I have been made aware by a London constituent that the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions Jobcentre Plus scheme is using the EU's European Social Fund (ESF) logo in its heading.

Can the Commission clarify the scale and purpose of the ESF's involvement with the UK Department for Work and Pensions Jobcentre Plus scheme? In what way do the ESF grants help my London constituents find work?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission confirms to the Honourable member that the Department for Work and Pensions, DWP, working through Jobcentre Plus, is using ESF funds to deliver a range of opportunities and support to help people into sustainable employment.

DWP is acting specifically as a national Co-financing Organisation, CFO, of the England and Gibraltar ESF operational programme. The programme is managed at national level by the DWP ESF Division with some management functions delegated in London to the Greater London Authority as Intermediate Body under the strategic direction of the Mayor.

In this respect, London has developed its own Regional Framework within the current national ESF programme and has been awarded the largest allocation, EUR 516.569.097 (16.7%) of the England and Gibraltar ESF programme allocation.

As one of the five London CFOs, DWP is securing ESF funds and contributing their own funds to co-finance 50% of over GBP 200 million ESF Priority 1 activity, dedicated to extending employment opportunities, in London.

So far, DWP CFO contracts have delivered a range of provision at local level aimed at disadvantaged people, helping more than 24 000 unemployed Londoners to move into jobs and 1 755 NEETs ([1]) into employment education or training. ESF Support to Families with Multiple Problems constitutes the largest element of ESF provision in London for 2011-2013. The rest of the provision is mainly shared between the ESF element of Work Programme — Incapacity benefit/Income support element and the London Day1 Support for Young People which aims to help young people with little or no work experience, with support from Day1 as Job Seekers Allowance claimants.

([1]) Not in Employment Education or Training.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003648/13
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(28 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Środki Funduszu Spójności a możliwość finansowania WPR

Czy, w świetle obowiązujących uregulowań prawnych, istnieje możliwość użycia przez państwa członkowskie środków z Funduszu Spójności na finansowanie zadań z zakresu II filara Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej, czyli rozwoju obszarów wiejskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Państwa członkowskie muszą zapewnić stałą komplementarność między poszczególnymi instrumentami finansowymi UE. Na obszarach wiejskich szczególnie ważne jest wspieranie tworzenia synergii pomiędzy polityką strukturalną, polityką zatrudnienia i polityką rozwoju obszarów wiejskich. Państwa członkowskie nie mogą jednak wykorzystywać funduszy przyznanych w ramach polityki spójności na finansowanie projektów w ramach programów rozwoju obszarów wiejskich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003648/13
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Cohesion fund and possibilities for financing the CAP

Under current regulations, would it be possible for Member States to use cohesion policy funding to finance projects under CAP II (development of rural areas)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Member States must ensure complementarity between different EU funding instruments at all times. In rural areas, it is particularly important to promote synergy between structural, employment and rural development policies. However, Member States cannot use funding allocated under cohesion policy to finance projects within rural development programmes.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003649/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(28 martie 2013)

Subiect: Lucrătorii din rețelele de apă și canalizare

La nivel european, există un număr important de lucrători în întreprinderi sau în structurile colectivităților locale care lucrează în domeniul exploatării și întreținerii rețelelor de apă și canalizare. Milioane de metri cubi de apă tranzitează zilnic aceste rețele, motiv pentru care condițiile de lucru pentru personalul în cauză — mecanici și electromecanici, electrotehnicieni, specialiști în hidraulică, geometrică, controlori etc. — sunt foarte dificile: umiditate, bacterii, obscuritate, ape murdare și cu reziduuri solide, solvenți, produse toxice, inclusiv animale moarte.

Calitatea aerului din aceste spații pune probleme și dă naștere la numeroase cazuri de intoxicări, probleme respiratorii, mergând până la diverse boli profesionale, care pot determina reducerea speranței de viață pentru aceste persoane.

Având în vedere apariția și dezvoltarea de noi tehnologii și materiale pentru acest domeniu, în ce măsură are Comisia în vedere stabilirea unor reglementări comune privind protecția acestor lucrători, folosind experiența acumulată la nivelul acestor structuri și schimbul de bune practici dintre întreprinderile și structurile autorităților locale și regionale din țările UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(21 mai 2013)

Tipurile de activități la care se referă distinsul membru sunt deja reglementate prin mai multe directive UE, acestea includ Directiva 98/24/CEE ([1]) privind agenții chimici, Directiva 2000/54/CE ([2]) privind agenții biologici și, în special, Directiva-cadru 89/391/CEE ([3]).

În special, angajatorul, în conformitate cu Directiva-cadru, are obligația de a evalua toate riscurile pentru sănătate și securitate la care lucrătorii sunt expuși sau pot fi expuși și să stabilească măsurile de prevenire și protecție, între altele, la alegerea echipamentului de lucru, a substanțelor chimice sau a preparatelor utilizate și a modului în care acestea sunt utilizate, precum și la amenajarea locurilor de muncă.

Un aspect important în acest sector se referă la riscurile asociate cu expunerea la hidrogenul sulfurat gazos. În legătură cu aceasta, Comisia a adoptat o valoare limită de expunere profesională în Directiva 2009/161/UE ([4]).

Prin urmare, angajatorul are obligația de a pune în aplicare orice măsuri adecvate de gestionare a riscurilor care asigură o îmbunătățire a nivelului de protecție acordat lucrătorilor și sunt integrate în toate activitățile desfășurate de întreprindere și/sau unitate la toate nivelurile ierarhice.

Directivele UE trebuie să fie transpuse de către statele membre și este responsabilitatea principală a autorităților lor competente să aplice legislația națională adecvată.

Comisia nu intenționează să instituie noi norme comune privind cazul specific menționat de distinsul membru.

([1]) Directiva 98/24/CE din 7 aprilie 1998 privind protecția sănătății și securității lucrătorilor împotriva riscurilor legate de prezența agenților chimici la locul de muncă [a paisprezecea directivă specială în sensul articolului 16 alineatul (1) din Directiva 89/391/CEE]. JO L 131, 5.5.1998.

([2]) Directiva 2000/54/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 18 septembrie 2000 privind protecția lucrătorilor împotriva riscurilor legate de expunerea la agenți biologici la locul de muncă [a șaptea directivă specială în sensul articolului 16 alineatul (1) din Directiva 89/391/CEE]. JO L 262, 17.10.2000.

([3]) Directiva 89/391/CEE din 12 iunie 1989 privind punerea în aplicare de măsuri pentru promovarea îmbunătățirii securității și sănătății lucrătorilor la locul de muncă — „Directiva-cadru". JO L 183, 29.6.1989.

([4]) Directiva 2009/161/UE a Comisiei din 17 decembrie 2009 de stabilire a unei a treia liste de valori-limită orientative de expunere profesională în aplicarea Directivei 98/24/CE a Consiliului și de modificare a Directivei 2000/39/CE a Comisiei. JO L 338 din 19.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003649/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Workers in the water and sewage networks

There is a large number of workers in businesses or in collectivised local structures working in the exploitation and maintenance of water and sewage networks across the EU. Millions of cubic metres of water pass through these networks each day. This is the reason why the working conditions of the relevant personnel, such as mechanical and electrical engineers, electrical technicians, hydraulic and geometric specialists, controllers, etc. are very difficult. These conditions include humidity, bacteria, murkiness, dirty water and water containing solid residues, solvents and toxic products, including dead animals.

The air quality in these spaces causes problems and gives rise to numerous cases of intoxication and respiratory problems. These can lead to various occupational diseases which can reduce life expectancy for these people.

Given the emergence and development of new technologies and materials for this domain, to what extent is the Commission considering setting up new common rules on the protection of these workers, using the experience gained at the level of these structures and the exchange of best practice between companies and the local and regional authorities in EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The types of work activities to which the Honourable Member refers are already covered by several EU Directives, this includes Chemical Agents Directive 98/24/EEC ([1]), the Biological Agents 2000/54/EC ([2]) Directive and particularly the framework Directive 89/391/EEC ([3]).

In particular, the employer, as provided for under the framework Directive, has the obligation to evaluate all the health and safety risks to which the workers are exposed or can be exposed and to establish the resulting prevention and protection measures, *inter alia* in the choice of work equipment, the chemical substances or preparations used and how they are used, and the fitting-out of work places.

An important issue in this sector concerns risks associated with exposure to the gas hydrogen sulphide. In connection with this, the Commission adopted an Occupational Exposure Limit Value in Directive 2009/161/EU ([4]).

The employer shall thus implement any appropriate risk management measures which ensure an improvement in the level of protection afforded to workers and are integrated into all the activities of the undertaking and/or establishment at all hierarchical levels.

The EU directives must be transposed by the Members States and it is the primary responsibility of their competent authorities to enforce the relevant national legislation.

The Commission has no intention of setting up new common rules on the specific case mentioned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work (fourteenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC). OJ L 131, 5.5.1998,.

([2]) Directive 2000/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2000 on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work (seventh individual directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC). OJ L 262, 17.10.2000,.

([3]) Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work — 'Framework Directive'. OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.

([4]) Commission Directive 2009/161/EU of 17 December 2009 establishing a third list of indicative occupational exposure limit values in implementation of Council Directive 98/24/EC and amending Commission Directive 2000/39/EC. OJ L 338 of 19.12.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003650/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση του Eurogroup για επιβολή τέλους επί των καταθέσεων των κυπριακών τραπεζών

Η πρωτόγνωρη απόφαση του Eurogroup για επιβολή τέλους επί των καταθέσεων των κυπριακών τραπεζών αποτελεί ένα τεράστιο πλήγμα, τόσο για την κυπριακή οικονομία όσο και, μέσω του προηγούμενου που δημιουργεί, για την ασφάλεια των καταθέσεων για τις οικονομίες των υπολοίπων μελών της Ευρωζώνης. Ήδη τα αποτελέσματα της εν λόγω απόφασης έχουν αντίκτυπο στις διεθνείς αγορές. Παράλληλα, η απόφαση παραβιάζει κατάφορα τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και δεν προστατεύονται οι καταθέτες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Συμμερίζεται πως η απόφαση του Eurogroup δεν συνάδει με την Οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων όσον αφορά το επίπεδο κάλυψης;

— Συμμερίζεται πως παραβιάζεται το άρθρο 17 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ στο οποίο αναφέρεται το δικαίωμα της ιδιοκτησίας;

— Συμμερίζεται πως υπονομεύεται η αρχή της ευρωπαϊκής αλληλεγγύης;

— Σε ποια χώρα, μέλος της ευρωζώνης, πάρθηκε παρόμοια απόφαση;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαΐου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές δεν έχουν επιβάλει κάποιο τέλος σε καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ. Ως εκ τούτου, δεν τίθεται ζήτημα συμβατότητας με την οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων.

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η έγκριση της πρότασης σχετικά με το πλαίσιο εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών, η οποία υποβλήθηκε τον Ιούνιο του 2012, θα αποσαφηνίσει σημαντικά τον τρόπο με τον οποίον επιτυγχάνεται η εξυγίανση των τραπεζών στο μέλλον. Όπως προτάθηκε, με τη νέα οδηγία θα θεσπιστεί στο σύνολο της ΕΕ ένα πλαίσιο με όλα τα εργαλεία αποφασιστικής παρέμβασης τόσο πριν προκύψουν προβλήματα όσο και στα αρχικά στάδια μιας τέτοιας διαδικασίας. Επίσης, σε περίπτωση που η χρηματοοικονομική κατάσταση μιας τράπεζας επιδεινωθεί ανεπανόρθωτα, οι εθνικές αρχές σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη θα διαθέτουν κοινή δέσμη «εργαλείων» και χάρτη πορείας για τη διαχείριση της πτώχευσης των τραπεζών. Το σημαντικότερο όλων είναι ότι το εργαλείο διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα που περιέχει αυτό το πλαίσιο θα επιτρέπει στις τράπεζες να προβαίνουν σε ανακεφαλαιοποίηση με απαξίωση ή μεγάλη μείωση της αξίας των μετοχών, ενώ οι απαιτήσεις των πιστωτών θα μειώνονται ή θα μετατρέπονται σε μετοχές. Καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 θα εξακολουθούν να είναι πλήρως εξασφαλισμένες και να αποκλείονται ρητά από το εργαλείο αυτό.

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 51 παράγραφος 1 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, οι διατάξεις αυτές αφορούν τα κράτη μέλη μόνο όταν εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Στην προκειμένη περίπτωση, το εν λόγω κράτος μέλος δεν ενήργησε στο πλαίσιο της εφαρμογής του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει καμία ένδειξη ότι η Κύπρος μπορεί να έχει αγνοήσει κάποια από τις διεθνείς υποχρεώσεις της όσον αφορά την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων με τη θέσπιση των εν λόγω μέτρων.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003650/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Decision by the Eurogroup to impose a levy on deposits in Cypriot banks

The unprecedented decision by the Eurogroup to impose a levy on deposits in Cypriot banks is a huge blow to the economy of Cyprus and the precedent it creates is undermining confidence in the security of deposits in the economies of the rest of the eurozone. This decision is already having an impact on international markets. It also represents a flagrant violation of human rights and fails to protect depositors.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it agree that this Eurogroup decision is incompatible with Directive 2009/14/EC on deposit-guarantee schemes as regards the coverage level?

— Does it agree that this represents a violation of Article 17 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU on the right to property?

— Does it agree that it undermines the principle of European solidarity?

— In which Member State belonging to the eurozone does a precedent exist for such a decision?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities have not imposed any particular levy on deposits under EUR 100 000. Therefore there is no issue of compatibility with Directive 2009/14/EC on deposit-guarantee schemes.

The Commission considers that the adoption of the proposal for a bank resolution framework which was presented in June 2012 will considerably clarify the modus operandi of bank resolution in the future. As proposed, the new Directive would introduce in the whole EU a framework with all the tools to intervene decisively in banking crisis both before problems occur and early on in the process if they do. And, if the financial situation of a bank deteriorates beyond repair, national authorities in all Member States would have a common toolkit and roadmap to manage the failure of banks. Most importantly, the bail-in tool enshrined in that framework would allow a bank to be recapitalised with shareholders wiped out or diluted, and creditors would have their claims reduced or converted to shares. Deposits below EUR 100 000 will continue to be fully guaranteed and are explicitly excluded from this tool.

According to Article 51(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. In the matter referred to the Member State concerned did not act in the course of implementation of EC law. The Commission has no indication that Cyprus might have disregarded any of its international obligations regarding the protection of fundamental rights by adopting the measures at issue.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003652/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Neuerung im IT-Bereich — Problemfelder

Im letzten Jahr wurden zahlreiche Neuerungen im IT-Bereich angedacht und verwirklicht, die schlussendlich auf ein „wearable computing" abzielen, das ihre Benützung im öffentlichen Bereich über unauffällige Hilfsmittel (Brille, Folie, etc) fast ohne äußere Sichtbarmachung zum Ziel hat. Diese Geräte lassen eine digitale Aufnahme von Videos, Tönen, Fotos und anschließendes Teilen im Internet zu, ohne dies für die betroffenen Personen erkennbar zu machen. Die hierdurch generierten Daten eröffnen ein vielfältiges Problemfeld: Fragen von Informations- und Datenschutz sind ebenso zu klären, wie der Umgang mit fehlender Einwilligung und der möglichen Verletzung von Persönlichkeitsrechten.

1. Ist die Kommission über die oben skizzierten Entwicklungen informiert?

2. Wenn ja, gibt es bereits Pläne zum Umgang mit diesem Problemfeld?

3. Hält die Kommission eine europaweite Kooperation/rechtliche Regelung in diesem Bereich für sinnvoll, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die grenzüberschreitenden Sachverhalte?

4. Wäre in diesem Kontext eine Re-Definition der Konzepte von öffentlichem und privatem Raum anzudenken, insbesondere im Kontext von Artikel 8 EMRK?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission ist über die technologische Entwicklung und über die Tatsache, dass viele Innovationen wie „wearable computing" die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten mit sich bringen, sehr wohl informiert.

Die Kommission hat zu Jahresbeginn 2012 die Datenschutzreform („die Reform") ([1]) vorgeschlagen. Die Reform stützt sich auf Artikel 16 AEUV, die neue durch den Vertrag von Lissabon eingeführte Rechtsgrundlage für den Erlass von Datenschutzvorschriften. Derzeit wird sie von beiden Gesetzgebern geprüft.

Unter Berücksichtigung des grenzüberschreitenden Charakters von Innovationen im digitalen Binnenmarkt wurde eine Verordnung als das angemessenste Rechtsinstrument angesehen, um zu gewährleisten, dass strikte und harmonisierte Vorschriften für alle für die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten Verantwortlichen gelten, die Einzelpersonen innerhalb der EU Waren und Dienstleistungen anbieten oder diese überwachen, wie Anbieter von Dienstleistungen, die unter „wearable computing" fallen.

Mit der Reform schafft die Kommission eine konsequentere, kohärentere Datenschutzregelung in der EU, die durchsetzbar ist und die Voraussetzungen dafür bietet, dass die digitale Wirtschaft im Binnenmarkt weiter Fuß fasst, die Bürger Kontrolle über ihre eigenen Daten erhalten und die Sicherheit für Wirtschaft und Staat in rechtlicher wie praktischer Hinsicht erhöht wird.

([1]) KOM(2012)11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003652/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Innovation in the IT sector — problems

Over the last year numerous innovations in the IT sector have been thought up and implemented that are aimed ultimately at 'wearable computing', intended to be used in the public domain by way of inconspicuous accessories (glasses, films, etc.) which will be almost invisible to the outside world. These devices allow the digital recording of videos, audio and images, which can subsequently be shared on the Internet without the persons concerned knowing anything about it. The data generated by this create a multitude of problems: questions concerning information and data protection need to be addressed and the issues of the lack of consent and the potential violation of personality rights need to be dealt with.

1. Is the Commission aware of the developments outlined above?

2. If so, are there already plans in place for dealing with these problems?

3. Does the Commission consider Europe-wide cooperation/regulations in this area to be appropriate, in particular in view of the cross-border nature of the matter?

4. In this context, would re-defining the concepts of the public and private sphere be worth considering, in particular in the context of Article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2013)

The Commission is well aware of technological development and that many innovations such as wearable computing entail the processing of personal data.

The Commission proposed the data protection Reform (the Reform) ([1]) early 2012. The Reform builds on Article 16 TFEU which is the new legal basis for the adoption of data protection rules introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. It is now under evaluation of both co-legislators.

Taking into account the cross border nature of innovation in the digital single market, a regulation was considered to be the most appropriate legal instrument to ensure that strong and harmonised rules apply to controllers of personal data offering goods and services to individuals in the EU, or monitoring them, such as providers of wearable computing goods services.

With the Reform, the Commission is building a stronger and more coherent data protection framework in the EU, backed by robust enforcement that will allow the digital economy to develop across the internal market, put individuals in control of their own data and reinforce legal and practical certainty for economic operators and public authorities.

([1]) COM(2012) 11.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003653/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Überprüfung der medizinischen Freigabesysteme

In der Vergangenheit gab es mehrmals Probleme mit unindizierten und gefährlichen Wirkungen bei Arzneimitteln, die erst verhältnismäßig spät vom Markt genommen worden sind. In diesem Kontext ist die Entscheidung des EU-Parlaments zur Überprüfung der medizinischen Freigabesysteme zu sehen.

1. Gibt es bei dieser Überprüfung bereits Ergebnisse?

2. Wird in Zukunft auch darauf geprüft werden, ob ein Medikament tatsächlich eine bessere Wirkung (weniger Nebenwirkungen) hat, als die sich bereits auf dem Markt befindlichen Produkte?

3. Existieren Vorschläge, um das Prozedere der Prüfung verbraucherfreundlicher zu gestalten und generell mehr (finanzielle) Unabhängigkeit von der Pharmaindustrie herzustellen?

4. Wird im Zuge der Überprüfung auch auf die Problematik der sowohl für die Pharmaindustrie, als auch für die EMA tätigen Experten eingegangen (insbesondere im Hinblick auf mögliche Interessenskonflikte)?

5. Gibt es konkrete Pläne, Medizinprodukte einem ähnlichen Zulassungsverfahren wie Arzneimitteln zu unterziehen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(14. Mai 2013)

Ein Arzneimittel kann nur in Verkehr gebracht werden, wenn gemäß den EU-Rechtsvorschriften([1]) eine Genehmigung für das Inverkehrbringen erteilt, seine Qualität, Sicherheit und Wirksamkeit bewertet und ein positives Nutzen-Risiko-Verhältnis im Zusammenhang mit seiner Verwendung festgestellt wurden. Nachdem ein Arzneimittel in Verkehr gebracht wurde, wird seine Sicherheit laufend überwacht.

Im Jahr 2010 wurden die Rechtsvorschriften geändert ([2]), um sie patientenfreundlicher zu machen. Inzwischen unterliegen bestimmte Arzneimittel einer zusätzlichen Überwachung, und die Patientinnen und Patienten können in der gesamten EU Nebenwirkungen direkt melden. Werden bei der Überwachung Sicherheitsprobleme festgestellt, so werden EU-weite Beurteilungen durchgeführt und gegebenenfalls entsprechende Rechtsvorschriften erlassen. Gemäß einer weiteren Überprüfung der Rechtsvorschriften im Jahr 2012 ([3]) muss die Kommission bis Juni 2018 über die zusätzliche Überwachung Bericht erstatten.

In der Verordnung zur Errichtung der Europäischen Arzneimittel-Agentur ([4]) ist festgelegt, dass die Ausschussmitglieder und Sachverständigen keine finanziellen oder sonstigen Interessen in der pharmazeutischen Industrie haben dürfen, die ihre Unparteilichkeit beeinflussen könnten. Der Rechnungshof hat in einem vor kurzem veröffentlichten Bericht ([5]) zwar anerkannt, dass die Agentur zu den Agenturen mit den fortschrittlichsten Vorschriften hinsichtlich Interessenkonflikten/-erklärungen zählt, gleichzeitig aber zu weiteren Verbesserungen aufgerufen. Die Agentur hat ihre Unabhängigkeitsregeln weiterentwickelt und die Empfehlungen des Rechnungshofs und des Europäischen Parlaments aus dem Entlastungsverfahren berücksichtigt.

Die Vorschläge der Kommission über Medizinprodukte ([6]) sehen kein zentralisiertes Systems der Zulassung von Medizinprodukten vor dem Inverkehrbringen vor, stärken jedoch das System der benannten Stellen, verschärfen die Marktüberwachung und etablieren einen Kontrollmechanismus für mit hohem Risiko behaftete Produkte. Die Vorschläge werden derzeit im Parlament und im Rat erörtert.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 726/2004 zur Festlegung von Gemeinschaftsverfahren für die Genehmigung und Überwachung von Human- und Tierarzneimitteln und zur Errichtung einer Europäischen Arzneimittel-Agentur (ABl. L 136 vom 30.4.2004) und Richtlinie 2001/83/EG zur Schaffung eines Gemeinschaftskodexes für Humanarzneimittel (ABl. L 311 vom 28.11.2001).

([2]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1235/2010 (ABl. L 348 vom 31.12.2010, S. 1) und Richtlinie 2010/84/EU (ABl. L 348 vom 31.12.2010, S. 74).

([3]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1027/2012 (ABl. L 316 vom 14.11.2012, S. 38) und Richtlinie 2012/26/EU (ABl. L 299 vom 27.10.2012, S. 1).

([4]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 726/2004.

([5]) Sonderbericht des Europäischen Rechnungshofes Nr. 15/2012.

([6]) KOM(2012)0541 endg. vom 26.9.2012 und KOM(2012)0542 endg. vom 26.9.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003653/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Review of medical monitoring systems

On several occasions in the past there have been problems of unindicated and dangerous effects of some drugs, with these products only being withdrawn from the market at a relatively late stage. This is the context in which the decision of Parliament to review medical monitoring systems should be seen.

1. Are there any results of this review yet?

2. In future, will there also be a check to see if a medicinal product actually works better (has fewer side-effects) than the products already on the market?

3. Are there any proposals for making the testing procedure more consumer-friendly and in general establishing greater (financial) independence from the pharmaceuticals industry?

4. Is the problem of experts working for both the pharmaceuticals industry and the European Medicines Agency addressed during the review (in particular with regard to possible conflicts of interest)?

5. Are there any specific plans to subject medicinal products to a similar approval procedure to that used for drugs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

A medicine can be placed on the market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted in accordance with the EU legislation ([1]), when its quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. Once placed on the market, the safety of a medicine is continuously monitored.

In 2010 the legislation was changed ([2]) to make it more patient-friendly. Now certain medicines are subject to additional monitoring and patients across the EU can directly report adverse reactions. When monitoring identifies safety issues, Union-wide assessments are carried out and appropriate regulatory actions are taken, if necessary. A further review of the legislation in 2012 ([3]) requires the Commission to report by June 2018 on the additional monitoring.

The founding Regulation of the European Medicines Agency ([4]) provides that committee members and experts shall not have financial or other interests in the pharmaceutical industry that could affect their impartiality. The Court of Auditors in a recent report ([5]) acknowledged that the Agency belongs to those with the most advanced rules on conflict/declaration of interest, while calling for further improvements. The Agency has further developed its rules on independence and addressed recommendations made by the Court of Auditors and by the Parliament during the discharge procedure.

The Commission proposals on medical devices ([6]) do not introduce a centralised pre-market approval system for medical devices but reinforce the system of notified bodies, strengthen market surveillance and establish a scrutiny mechanism for high-risk devices. The proposals are under discussion in the Parliament and the Council.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency (OJ L 136, 30.4.2004) and Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use (OJ L 311, 28.11.2001).
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1235/2010 (OJ L 348, 31.12.2010, p. 1) and Directive 2010/84/EU (OJ L 348, 31.12.2010, p. 74).
([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1027/2012 (OJ L 316, 14.11.2012, p. 38) and Directive 2012/26/EU (OJ L 299, 27.10.2012, p. 1).
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004.
([5]) European Court of Auditors Special Report 15/2012.
([6]) COM(2012) 0541 final , 26.9.2012 and COM(2012) 0542 final, 26.9.2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003654/13
an die Kommission
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (ALDE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Kombination der Rechtsprechung von zwei Mitgliedstaaten in einer Anklageschrift

Ist es mit EU-Recht vereinbar, wenn in einer Anklageschrift die Rechtsprechung zweier Mitgliedstaaten für die Urteilsfindung in einem Gerichtsverfahren kombiniert angewandt wird?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Die Anfrage des Herrn Abgeordneten scheint sich darauf zu beziehen, dass bei der Entscheidung der Staatsanwaltschaft, ob wegen einer Straftat oder eines Verbrechen gegen eine Person Anklage erhoben wird, die Rechtsprechung mehrerer Mitgliedstaaten berücksichtigt werden kann.

In Artikel 49 der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union ist der Grundsatz der Gesetzmäßigkeit im Zusammenhang mit Straftaten festgelegt. In Artikel 2 des Vertrags über die Europäische Union wird daran erinnert, dass die Europäische Union auf dem Grundsatz der Rechtsstaatlichkeit beruht. Gemäß Artikel 51 Absatz 1 der Charta der Grundrechte gilt die Charta für die Mitgliedstaaten ausschließlich bei der Durchführung von EU-Recht.

Staatsanwälte und Richter sind somit der Rechtsstaatlichkeit verpflichtet. Im Rahmen der Rechtsstaatlichkeit wird eine Staatsanwaltschaft jedoch von keiner Vorschrift des EU-Rechts daran gehindert, bei der Einleitung eines Gerichtsverfahrens die Rechtsprechung verschiedener Mitgliedstaaten zu zitieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003654/13
to the Commission
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Combining the case law of two Member States in one bill of indictment

Is it compatible with EC law for the case law of two Member States to be combined in a bill of indictment with a view to a judgment in court proceedings?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The question of the Honourable Member seems to relate to the possibility to take jurisprudence of different Member States into account when the public prosecutor decides whether to charge someone for an offence or crime.

Article 49 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union stipulates the principle of legality of criminal offences. Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union reminds that the European Union is founded on the rule of law. According to Article 51(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

Public prosecutors and judges are thus bound by the rule of law. Within the limits of the rule of law, nothing in European Union law prevents a public prosecutor from considering and quoting the jurisprudence of different Member States when bringing someone to trial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003655/13
to the Council (President of the European Council)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: PCE/PEC — End of presidential term

Given that he has announced that he will not seek re-appointment when his term of office expires in 2014, will the President of the European Council agree with me that he is now, in effect, a 'lame-duck' president?

Reply
(13 May 2013)

The Honourable Member is invited to acquaint herself with the treaty, which provides quite clearly that the President of the European Council may in any case not serve for another term.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003656/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Vice-President/High Representative's pension fund

With her term in office due to expire in 2014, could the Vice-President/High Representative please advise me of the anticipated value of her pension fund on conclusion of her term in office?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Vice-President/High Representative is entitled to a pension, payable from the age of 65 and calculated in accordance with Regulation No 422/67/EEC, 5/67/Euratom of the Council of 25.7.1967 with subsequent amendments and Council Decision of 1 December 2009 (2009/910/EU). The pension is subject to community tax.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003657/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: SME participation in Framework Programme 7

Can the Commission please provide figures on the number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) taking part in collaborative research projects under Framework Programme 7 (FP7)?

In particular, it would be interesting to have figures on SME participation in elements of FP7 which are not specifically targeted at SME participation.

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) foresees for its Specific Programme 'Cooperation' a budgetary target dedicated to SMEs of 15%. This target was reached at the end of 2011. Currently, the corresponding figure is 16.6% which represents an amount of EUR 3.5 billion for 12 550 participations by SMEs.

The target was reached by a number of activities specifically dedicated to SMEs. They comprise for instance calls with topics of interest to SMEs in the respective industry sector, calls which require the participation of SMEs in the consortia as well as a number of calls with ring-fenced budgets for the participating SMEs. These activities were accompanied by support activities, brokerage events for consortia building and information campaigns through the support networks, like the FP7 National Contact Points and the Enterprise Europe Network.

An analysis of the annual work programme contribution to the above figure shows that the annual SME funding started with 13.9% for Work Programme (WP) 2007, 15.8% for WP 2008, 14.4% for WP 2009 with a slight increase to 17.5% for WP 2010, whereas the abovementioned activities led to an increase to 22.8% for WP 2011 ([1]). Detailed analyses of the SME participation in the framework programme, including the other Specific Programmes, can be found in the periodical SME Progress Reports under http://ec.europa.eu/research/sme-techweb/index_en.cfm?pg=publications

([1]) As the negotiations of projects from WP 2012 are still ongoing, no definite figures are available yet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003658/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: European Research Area — ERA Chair proposals under Horizon 2020

With regard to the proposed ERA Chairs to be funded through Horizon 2020, can the Commission answer the following questions:

— How many ERA Chairs does the Commission expect to fund?

— How much funding will be allocated to each Chair, and what will the total cost be?

— Will the scheme be funded exclusively through Horizon 2020?

— From which Horizon 2020 budget line will the funding be allocated?

— How long will the Chairs be funded?

— What arrangements will be put in place to ensure effective spending?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The European Research Area (ERA) aims at being a unified research area, in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely. Through ERA, the EU and its Member States will strengthen their scientific and technological bases and their competitiveness.

As part of its strategy to close the research and innovation divide and to accelerate an open labour market for researchers within the context of ERA, the Commission is proposing 'ERA Chairs' ([1]) as a new measure under Horizon 2020. It will attract outstanding researchers to institutions with a clear potential for research excellence. The ERA Chairs will support these institutions to develop, in a particular field, the level of excellence required to successfully compete internationally, hereby effectively widening participation.

To test the concept and learn from experience, the Commission published a pilot call under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) ([2]). In the pilot call ERA chairs will be funded by FP7 but institutions are also requested to participate in the budgeted costs and to mobilise other funding streams, including Cohesion funds, to build a stairway to excellence. The information gathered through the pilot call and its monitoring actions will be used to set up the calls to be launched under Horizon 2020. As a consequence, the Commission will only be in a position to precise funding modalities, the budget allocated to each proposal and follow up measures to ensure compliance with rules under Horizon 2020 at a later stage.

In addition, the interinstitutional negotiations on Horizon 2020 are still ongoing and it is premature to provide information on the future course of the action.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/era-chairs_en.html
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_FP7?callIdentifier=FP7-ERAChairs-PilotCall 2013&specificProgram=CAPACITIES#wlp_call_FP7

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003659/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: ERA Chairs pilot scheme under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7)

With regard to the FP7 pilot call for European Research Area (ERA) Chairs, can the Commission answer the following questions:

— How long will the Commission fund those who are successful in securing one of the pilot ERA Chairs?

— What budget does the Commission expect to allocate to each ERA Chair?

— What controls will the Commission impose on how this funding is allocated/used?

— What proportion of the grant does the Commission expect to be spent on: salary costs for the ERA Chair; salary costs for the ERA Chair's team; direct research costs; capital/infrastructure?

— Against what criteria will the Commission judge the pilot exercise? Will the pilot exercise be fully and publically evaluated before any further Chairs are launched under Horizon 2020?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is launching a pilot call for 'ERA Chairs' under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) ([1]) with a EUR 12 million budget. The requested EU contribution shall not exceed EUR 2.4 million for a period of up to 60 months and 90% of the total estimated budget for each proposal.

The Commission will sign with institutions a Grant Agreement in which the proposed deliverables and milestones are specified. The selection of the ERA Chair holder is the first deliverable and institutions shall provide a report on the selection procedure. Institutions shall also report every 18 months on the state of implementation and a mid-term review will be conducted after 30 months. The Commission will assess at all stages if the deliverables and milestones have been attained.

The budget will be dedicated to salaries of the ERA Chair and his/her team and costs related with the implementation of the work plan such as research training, conferences, workshops and equipment. Although no specific proportion is required for personnel costs, a minimum of 300 months of full-time work equivalent is to be foreseen. Funding for direct research costs should be provided from other sources.

The pilot call will be assessed using multiple sources of information including analysis of the proposals (number, scope, their qualities and weaknesses, etc.) which will be taken into account to decide on the timing and details of calls to be launched under Horizon 2020.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_FP7?callIdentifier=FP7-ERAChairs-PilotCall2013&specificProgram=CAPACITIES#wlp_call_FP7.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003660/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(28 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Veto turco contro Cipro danneggia anche l'Italia

Il ministro dell'Energia Taner Yildiz ha annunciato che il governo turco ha deciso di sospendere i progetti avviati con l'Eni (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi) a causa della partecipazione del gruppo petrolifero italiano al programma di esplorazione dei giacimenti di gas al largo delle coste di Cipro, che Ankara contesta in una disputa sulle acque territoriali.

A gennaio l'Eni aveva annunciato la firma di un accordo con il governo di Nicosia per l'esplorazione e lo sfruttamento di tre zone del giacimento di gas al largo delle coste dell'isola, in consorzio con il gruppo coreano Kogas, e la Turchia contesta al governo di Nicosia il diritto di gestire autonomamente le risorse energetiche al largo dell'isola. Inoltre, Ankara ha minacciato più volte di sospendere ogni collaborazione con i gruppi petroliferi internazionali che concludano accordi con il governo cipriota e ha diffidato il governo cipriota negli ultimi giorni dall'usare le riserve di gas quale garanzia per superare l'attuale crisi finanziaria

Come valuta la Commissione questo atteggiamento della Turchia, anche in relazione ai gravi danni che può arrecare all'economia di due Stati membri — Cipro e Italia — e quali iniziative intende intraprendere in merito?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente della questione segnalata dall'onorevole deputato e sta seguendo il caso.

Come l'Unione europea ha costantemente ribadito negli ultimi cinque anni, tra l'altro nelle ultime conclusioni del Consiglio del dicembre 2012, gli Stati membri hanno la facoltà di stipulare accordi bilaterali e di esplorare e sfruttare le loro risorse naturali in conformità del diritto dell'UE e internazionale.

La Turchia, che sta negoziando l'adesione all'UE, deve impegnarsi in maniera inequivocabile a intrattenere rapporti di buon vicinato nonché a risolvere pacificamente le controversie nel rispetto del diritto internazionale. La Commissione affronterà il problema, se del caso, con le autorità turche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003660/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Turkish veto on Cyprus is also damaging Italy

Taner Yildiz, the Minister for Energy, has announced that the Turkish Government has decided to suspend projects launched with Eni (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi) because of the Italian oil group's participation in the gas exploration programme off the Cypriot coast. Ankara is challenging this programme in a dispute over territorial waters.

In January, Eni announced the signing of an agreement with the Nicosia Government for the exploration and exploitation of three offshore gas field areas around the island, in a consortium with the Korean group Kogas. Turkey is challenging Cyprus's right to independently manage energy resources off the island's coast. In addition, Ankara has threatened to suspend all collaboration with international oil groups that enter into agreements with the Cypriot Government on several occasions, and has recently warned Cyprus not to use the gas reserves as a guarantee for combating the current financial crisis.

How does the Commission view this attitude on the part of Turkey, considering the serious damage that it may cause to the economies of two Member States, Cyprus and Italy?

What steps does it intend to take on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member and follows the case.

As the European Union has consistently reaffirmed over the past five years, including in the last conclusions of the Council in December 2012, Member States have the right to enter into bilateral agreements and to explore and exploit their natural resources in accordance with EU and international law.

Turkey, as a country negotiating accession to the EU, needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to the respect of international law. The Commission will raise the issue as appropriate with the Turkish authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003661/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(28 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Infezioni HCV

Secondo i dati della World Health Organization del luglio 2012, nel mondo circa 150 milioni di persone sono cronicamente infettate dal virus dell'epatite C, si stimano 3-4 milioni di nuove infezioni ogni anno e più di 350.000 persone muoiono ogni anno per le malattie correlate all'epatite C. La percezione della diffusione e della gravità dell'infezione è ancora molto scarsa.

Molte infezioni da HCV vengono contratte durante prestazioni odontoiatriche e questo fenomeno è ancora sottovalutato anche nelle indagini epidemiologiche. Attualmente, in Europa non esiste una regolamentazioni comune che fissi standard di professionalità per gli assistenti alla poltrona e questo si ripercuote sia sul paziente che sulla mobilità professionale di queste importanti figure.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se intende fissare degli standard relativi a questa figura professionale che ne garantiscano la mobilità in Europa e che tutelino al contempo i pazienti?

2. Quali iniziative intende adottare la Commissione al fine di verificare la corretta acquisizione di dati epidemiologici sull'HCV?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2013)

La salvaguardia dei pazienti a livello di Unione è di importanza cruciale e a tal riguardo il Consiglio sulla sicurezza dei pazienti ([1]) stabilisce una serie di iniziative che gli Stati membri devono attuare per ridurre il rischio di danni alle persone che ricevono assistenza sanitaria.

La libera circolazione di tutti i professionisti, inclusi gli assistenti odontoiatri, è già agevolata dalla direttiva relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali ([2]).

Riguardo all'epidemiologia del virus dell'epatite C, il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (CEPCM) pubblicherà la sua prima relazione di monitoraggio nel corso dell'estate 2013. I casi di epatite C riportati da 26 Stati membri dell'UE/SEE nel 2011 sono stati 29.896, equivalenti a una media di 7,8 casi per 100.000 persone.

La via di contagio notificata con maggior frequenza è l'assunzione di stupefacenti per via endovenosa, che costituisce quasi l'80 % di tutti i casi riportati, seguita con l'8 % dal contagio per via ematica. I contagi per esposizione professionale o ferite provocate da aghi rappresentano lo 0,3 % dei casi e le infezioni nosocomiali il 2,5 %. L'Antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections epidemic intelligence system (ARHAI EPIS), gestito dal CEPCM, si occupa di eventuali focolai di virus di epatite C, comprese le infezioni nel corso di interventi chirurgici o prestazioni odontoiatriche.

([1]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio sulla sicurezza dei pazienti, 2009/C 151/01.
([2]) Direttiva 2005/36/EC relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali, GU L 255 del 30.9.2005, pagg. 22-142.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003661/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: HCV infections

According to World Health Organisation data from July 2012, approximately 150 million people are chronically infected with the hepatitis C virus worldwide. It is estimated that there are 3-4 million new infections every year, and more than 350 000 people die annually from related illnesses. Awareness of the spread and seriousness of infection is still very low.

Many HCV infections are contracted during dental treatment, and this factor is still underestimated even in epidemiological surveys. Currently, there are no common rules in Europe setting professional standards for dental assistants, and this affects both the patients and the professional mobility of those who perform this important job.

Does the Commission intend to set standards for dental assistants to ensure that they can enjoy mobility within Europe and, at the same time, to protect patients?

What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that epidemiological data on HCV are correctly obtained?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Safeguarding patient safety in the EU is crucial and in this regard the Council Recommendation on patient safety ([1]) sets out a number of actions to be implemented by Member States to reduce harm for patients who receive healthcare.

The mobility of all professionals, including dental assistants, is already facilitated by the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications ([2]).

Concerning the epidemiology of the hepatitis C virus, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) will publish its first surveillance report on hepatitis C in summer 2013. As of 2011, 29 896 cases of hepatitis C were reported from 26 EU/EEA Member States, which represents an average rate of 7.8 cases per 100 000 people.

Injecting drug use is the most commonly reported route of transmission accounting for almost 80% of all cases, followed by blood which accounted for 8% of cases. Transmission through occupational exposure or needle-stick injuries accounts for 0.3% of the cases and nosocomial infection for 2.5%. Any outbreak of hepatitis C virus, including infections during surgery or dentistry practice would be covered through the Antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections epidemic intelligence system (ARHAI EPIS) operated by the ECDC.

([1]) Council Recommendation on patient safety, 2009/C 151/01.
([2]) Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22-142.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003662/13
aan de Commissie
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: De Spaanse Tax Lease Zaak met nummer SA.21233 C/2011

1. In een nieuwsbericht van 13 maart 2013 ([1]) staat dat een definitieve beslissing over het Spaanse tax lease systeem eind april 2013 wordt verwacht, kan de Commissie dit bevestigen?

2 a) Uit nieuwsberichten van 14 maart 2013 ([2]) blijkt dat de Spaanse overheid de Commissie formeel heeft gevraagd om Spanje niet te verplichten de ontvangen staatssteun terug te betalen, kan de Commissie dit bevestigen?

2 b) Zo ja, is de Commissie van plan om aan dit verzoek van Spanje tegemoet te komen?

3. In de „opening decision" van 29 juni 2011 ([3]) aangaande het Spaanse tax lease systeem schrijft de Commissie dat er geen sprake is van schending met een algemeen beginsel van het Gemeenschapsrecht en dat de Commissie dus niets in de weg staat om mogelijk ongeoorloofde staatssteun van Spanje terug te vorderen ([4]). Is de Commissie ondertussen van gedachte veranderd?

4. Uit nieuwsberichten van 14 maart 2013 ([5]) blijkt dat de Spaanse Minister van Industrie op 12 maart aan Commissaris Almunia heeft gevraagd om Spanje een zelfde behandeling te geven als Frankrijk in de beschikking van 20 december 2006. ([6]) Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat Spanje dit verzoek aan de Commissie heeft gedaan?

5 a) Is de Commissie voornemens om aan dit Spaanse verzoek tegemoet te komen en mogelijk ongeoorloofde staatssteun van het Spaanse tax lease systeem niet terug te vorderen?

5 b) Zo ja, op grond waarvan denkt de Commissie te kunnen rechtvaardigen dat Spanje mogelijke staatssteun niet terug hoeft te betalen?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(28 mei 2013)

Er is nog geen datum vastgesteld voor de vaststelling van het definitieve besluit.

Na de inleiding van de procedure hebben de Spaanse autoriteiten en derde partijen opmerkingen gezonden aan de Commissie, onder meer met betrekking tot mogelijk gewettigd vertrouwen dat het niet terugvorderen van mogelijk onverenigbare steun kan rechtvaardigen. De Commissie is deze opmerkingen aan het analyseren en heeft hierover nog geen standpunt ingenomen.

De erkenningsvoorwaarden voor gewettigd vertrouwen zijn vastgesteld door het Hof van Justitie en zullen uiteraard in deze zaak worden toegepast zoals in andere zaken.

Overeenkomstig de EU-regels moet onverenigbare staatsteun worden teruggevorderd, tenzij gewettigd vertrouwen of rechtszekerheid kan worden aangetoond.

([1]) Nieuwsbericht 13 maart 2013 http://www.farodevigo.es/economia/2013/03/13/astillero-pierde-barco-dilatarse-fallo--tax-lease/772914.html

([2]) Nieuwsbericht 14 maart 2013 http://www.deia.com/2013/03/14/economia/espana-pide-a-almunia-que-exima-al-sector-naval-de-devolver-las-ayudas en zie ook nieuwsbericht 14 maart 2013 http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2013/03/14/economia/soria-pide-a-la-ce-que-no-se-obligue-a-devolver-las-ayudas-del-39tax-lease39-naval.

([3]) C(2011) 4494 final.

([4]) Citaat uit opening decision: „At this stage, the Commission is not aware of any breach to a general principle of European Law which would prevent the Commission to request the recovery of possibly unlawful aid". (betreft pagina 25, Overweging 99).

([5]) Nieuwsbericht 14 maart 2013 http://www.deia.com/2013/03/14/economia/espana-pide-a-almunia-que-exima-al-sector-naval-de-devolver-las-ayudas en zie ook nieuwsbericht 14 maart 2013 http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2013/03/14/economia/soria-pide-a-la-ce-que-no-se-obligue-a-devolver-las-ayudas-del-39tax-lease39-naval.

([6]) betreffende de door Frankrijk uit hoofde van artikel 39 CA van de Code général des impôts tenuitvoer gelegde steunmaatregel (Steunmaatregel C 46/2004 (ex NN 65/2004)) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:112:0041:0066:NL:PDF.
(zie hoofdstuk 5 betreffende „Terugvordering" Overweging 184 t/m 196).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003662/13
to the Commission
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Spanish Tax Lease Case No SA.21233 C/2011

1. According to a news report of 13 March 2013 ([1]), a final decision on the Spanish tax lease system can be expected towards the end of April 2013. Can the Commission confirm this?

2(a) According to news reports of 14 March 2013 ([2]), the Spanish Government has formally asked the Commission not to require Spain to repay the state aid received. Can the Commission confirm this?

2(b) If so, does the Commission intend to grant Spain's request?

3. In the 'opening decision' of 29 June 2011 ([3]) concerning the Spanish tax lease system, the Commission writes that no general principle of Community law is violated and there is therefore nothing to prevent the Commission from demanding that Spain refund any unlawful state aid ([4]). Has the Commission changed its mind since then?

4. According to news reports of 14 March 2013 ([5]), Spain's Minister for Industry asked Commissioner Almunia on 12 March to accord Spain the same treatment as was accorded to France in the decision of 20 December 2006 ([6]). Can the Commission confirm that Spain made this request of the Commission?

5(a) Does the Commission intend to grant this request by Spain and refrain from recovering any unlawful state aid from the Spanish tax lease system?

5(b) If so, on what basis does the Commission believe that it can justify allowing Spain not to repay any state aid?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The date of adoption of the final decision has not been fixed yet.

Following the opening of procedure, the Spanish authorities and third parties provided comments to the Commission, including regarding possible legitimate expectations which could justify the absence of recovery of possible incompatible aid. The Commisison is analysing all these comments and has not yet taken a position.

The conditions under which legitimate expectation can be recognised have been defined by the Court of Justice and these conditions will be of course applied in the present case as in other cases.

In accordance with EU rules, incompatible state aid should be recovered unless legitimate expectation or legal certainty can be proved.

([1]) News report of 13 March 2013, http://www.farodevigo.es/economia/2013/03/13/astillero-pierde-barco-dilatarse-fallo--tax-lease/772914.html

([2]) News report of 14 March 2013, http://www.deia.com/2013/03/14/economia/espana-pide-a-almunia-que-exima-al-sector-naval-de-devolver-las-ayudas; see also news report of 14 March 2013 http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2013/03/14/economia/soria-pide-a-la-ce-que-no-se-obligue-a-devolver-las-ayudas-del-39tax-lease39-naval

([3]) C(2011) 4494 final.

([4]) Quotation from the opening decision: 'At this stage, the Commission is not aware of any breach to a general principle of European Law which would prevent the Commission to request the recovery of possibly unlawful aid'. (Relates to page 25, Recital 99.)

([5]) News report of 14 March 2013, http://www.deia.com/2013/03/14/economia/espana-pide-a-almunia-que-exima-al-sector-naval-de-devolver-las-ayudas; see also news report of 14 March 2013, http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2013/03/14/economia/soria-pide-a-la-ce-que-no-se-obligue-a-devolver-las-ayudas-del-39tax-lease39-naval

([6]) With regard to the aid measure implemented by France pursuant to Article 39 CA of the Code général des impôts (Aid measure C 46/2004 (ex NN 65/2004)), http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:112:0041:0066:NL:PDF (see Chapter 5 concerning recovery, Recitals 184-196).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-003663/13
adresată Comisiei
George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)
(28 martie 2013)

Subiect: Criza din UE: folosirea depozitelor pentru recapitalizarea bancară

Criza cu care ne confruntăm este de o extremă gravitate, iar măsurile aprobate în cadrul Eurogrupului nu fac decât să o adâncească, subminând încrederea în construcţia europeană.

Cum ar mai putea cetăţenii europeni să creadă în beneficiile unei monede şi ale unei pieţe unice, în condiţiile în care Comisia Europeană a anunţat recent că peste 26 de milioane de cetăţeni din Uniunea Europeană nu au loc de muncă?

Consideră Comisia Europeană că propunerea unui proiect legislativ în care să se prevadă că depozitele de peste 100 000 de euro vor putea fi folosite pentru recapitalizarea bancară reprezintă o soluţie justă pentru ieşirea din criză, precum şi pentru recâştigarea încrederii cetăţenilor?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(6 mai 2013)

În cadrul reuniunii Eurogrupului din 15/16 martie 2013 nu au fost adoptate măsuri obligatorii din punct de vedere juridic cu privire la Cipru, ci s-a ajuns la un acord politic referitor la principalele elemente ale programului de ajustare legate de asistenţa financiară acordată Ciprului. O componentă a acestui pachet este reprezentată de angajamente unilaterale din partea autorităţilor cipriote. La 25 martie 2013, Eurogrupul a ajuns la un acord cu autorităţile cipriote cu privire la principalele elemente necesare pentru un viitor program de ajustare macroeconomică, care este susţinut de toate statele membre din zona euro, precum şi de cele trei instituţii.

Comisia consideră că este necesar să se adopte de urgenţă propunerea privind redresarea şi rezoluţia bancară. De îndată ce directiva va fi în vigoare, Uniunea Europeană va dispune de un cadru comun de gestionare a băncilor în dificultate, prin intermediul unei serii de instrumente de rezoluţie, inclusiv de recapitalizare internă. Un obiectiv important al acestui act legislativ este de a restabili încrederea în sectorul bancar şi de a reduce la minimum utilizarea banilor publici pentru salvarea băncilor.

Depozitele cu o valoare mai mică de 100 000 de euro vor continua să fie pe deplin garantate şi sunt excluse în mod explicit din instrumentul de recapitalizare internă.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003663/13
to the Commission
George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Crisis in the EU: using deposits to recapitalise banks

The crisis affecting the EU is extremely serious and the measures adopted in the Eurogroup are deepening rather than alleviating it, undermining confidence in the European project.

How can European citizens continue to believe in the benefits of a single currency and a single market when the Commission has recently announced that more than 26 million EU citizens have no job?

Does the Commission believe that proposing legislation under which deposits of over EUR 100 000 can be used to recapitalise banks represents a fair solution with a view to exiting the crisis and regaining public confidence?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Eurogroup on 15/16 March 2013 did not adopt legally binding measures regarding Cyprus. It reached a political agreement on the key elements of the adjustment programme linked to the financial assistance granted to Cyprus. Part of this package is made of unilateral commitments on the side of the Cypriot authorities. On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cypriot authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme, which is supported by all euro area Member States as well as the three institutions.

The Commisison considers it necessary to urgently adopt the proposal on Bank Recovery and Resolution. Once the directive is in place, the European Union will have a common framework for dealing with ailing banks with a number of resolution tools, including bail-in. One important objective of this legislation is to restore confidence in the banking sector and minimise the use of public money to rescue banks.

Deposits below EUR 100 000 will continue to be fully guaranteed and are explicitly excluded from the bail-in tool.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003664/13
a la Comisión
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Modificación del programa de exploración Canarias 1 a 9

El 16 de marzo de 2012, el Gobierno español aprobó el Real Decreto 547/2012, por el que se aprobaba la modificación del programa de exploración para los permisos de perforación de hidrocarburos denominados Canarias 1 a 9. Mediante dicha modificación, se permite a las empresas participantes ([1]) perforar un número indeterminado de pozos exploratorios, de 3 500 metros de profundidad, en una zona marina de 660 060 hectáreas frente a las costas de las islas canarias de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote, con un mínimo de dos pozos. Sin embargo, no se ha hecho ninguna evaluación estratégica de impacto ambiental.

1. Dado que esta modificación del programa de exploración establece un marco para la autorización de futuros proyectos que incluyan perforaciones a gran profundidad, los cuales ya son de por sí objeto de una evaluación de impacto ambiental, ¿ha sido esta modificación sometida a una evaluación estratégica de impacto ambiental y a un proceso de participación pública, de conformidad con la Directiva 2001/41/CE? De no haber sido así, ¿por qué?

2. Dado que el susodicho decreto regula futuros proyectos que podrían, según una cantidad considerable de estudios científicos ([2]), afectar al menos a dos zonas importantes para la conservación de las aves (ZICA) ([3]), veinticinco zonas marinas, doce hábitats y ochenta y dos especies protegidas, ¿puede descartar la Comisión que se produzcan daños a especies y zonas protegidas por la red Natura 2000?

3. Consciente de que las actividades que regula esta modificación del programa de exploración pueden afectar a masas de agua costeras que son prácticamente las únicas fuentes de abastecimiento de agua para la población de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote, ¿cree la Comisión que dicha modificación debería incluir un análisis de posibles alteraciones en el estado de las masas de agua costeras según la Directiva marco sobre el agua (2000/60/CE)?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003665/13
a la Comisión
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Modificación del programa de exploración relacionado con Canarias 1 a 9 (2)

El 16 de marzo de 2012, el Gobierno español aprobó el Real Decreto 547/2012, por el que se aprobaba la modificación del programa de investigación para los permisos de investigación de hidrocarburos denominados Canarias 1 a 9. Mediante dicha modificación, se permite a las empresas participantes ([4]) perforar un número indeterminado de pozos exploratorios, de 3 500 metros de profundidad, en una zona marina de 660 060 hectáreas frente a las costas de las islas canarias de Fuerteventura y Lanzarote, con un mínimo de dos pozos. Sin embargo, no se ha hecho ninguna evaluación estratégica ambiental.

Dado que, mientras que España ha determinado en la evaluación de la estrategia marina las actividades contenidas en la modificación del programa de investigación, no se ha hecho ningún análisis de los componentes, tanto cualitativos y cuantitativos como nacionales y transfronterizos, de la presión y el impacto identificados, ni de las tendencias perceptibles y sus consecuencias acumulativas y sinérgicas, ¿piensa la Comisión que el Gobierno español, mediante la simple descripción de las susodichas actividades, ha cumplido con las condiciones descritas en la Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina (2008/56/CE)?

([1]) Repsol Investigaciones Petrolíferas, S.A. (50 %), Woodside Energy Iberia, S.A. (30 %) y RWE Dea AG (20 %).
([2]) Realizados, entre otros, por SEO/BirdLife, SECAC y WWF, así como por investigadores de las Universidades de Hamburgo, Galveston (Texas), Barcelona, La Laguna (Tenerife) y Las Palmas.
([3]) ES0000532, Los Islotes de Lanzarote, y ES0000531, Estrecho de La Bocaina.
([4]) Repsol Investigaciones Petrolíferas, S.A. (50 %), Woodside Energy Iberia, S.A. (30 %) y RWE Dea AG (20 %).

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Mediante el Real Decreto 547/2012, España ha convalidado el Real Decreto 1462/2001 por el que se otorgan permisos de investigación de hidrocarburos a un operador privado. Los citados permisos de prospección no pueden ser considerados planes ni programas en el sentido de la Directiva 2001/42/CE ([5]) dado que no establecen un marco para la futura autorización de proyectos de explotación en un sector dado sino que delimitan la zona de investigación y especifican las inversiones necesarias durante el periodo de vigencia de los permisos. Dichos permisos están sujetos al cumplimiento de los requisitos establecidos por la legislación relativa a la evaluación del impacto ambiental.

Tras la aprobación del Real Decreto 547/2012 por el Gobierno español, la Comisión recibió varias preguntas parlamentarias y denuncias a raíz de las cuales ha iniciado una investigación para asegurarse de que se habían cumplido los requisitos aplicables en virtud de la legislación medioambiental de la UE.

Las autoridades españolas han informado de que están efectuando una evaluación completa del impacto ambiental conforme a lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2011/92/UE ([6]) (Directiva EIA). Esa evaluación del impacto ambiental ha de considerar todos los aspectos medioambientales y, en particular, los de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([7]) (Directiva sobre hábitats). Así pues, habrá de determinar los eventuales efectos en la red Natura 2000. También deberá incluir medidas para prevenir el deterioro del estado de las masas de agua costeras, de acuerdo con lo establecido por la Directiva 2000/60/CE ([8]).

La Directiva 2008/56/CE ([9]) exige que los Estados miembros desarrollen y apliquen estrategias marinas dirigidas a alcanzar o mantener un buen estado medioambiental del medio marino a más tardar en 2020. Los servicios de la Comisión están examinando la evaluación inicial enviada por España de conformidad con la Directiva 2008/56/CE.

([5]) Directiva 2001/42/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 27 de junio de 2001, relativa a la evaluación de los efectos de determinados planes y programas en el medio ambiente (DO L 197 de 21.7.2001).

([6]) DO L 26 de 28.01.2012 (versión codificada de la Directiva 85/337/CEE, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, en su versión modificada).

([7]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

([8]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

([9]) Directiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de junio de 2008 , por la que se establece un marco de acción comunitaria para la política del medio marino (Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina) (DO L 164 de 25.6.2008).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003664/13
an die Kommission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) und Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms Canarias 1-9

Am 16. März 2012 wurde die Königliche Verordnung 547/2012, durch die eine Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms für die Genehmigungen Canarias 1-9 zum Bohren nach Kohlenwasserstoffen verabschiedet wurde, durch die spanische Regierung genehmigt. Diese Änderung erlaubt es den beteiligten Unternehmen ([1]), in einem 660 060 ha großen Meeresgebiet vor den Küsten der beiden Kanarischen Inseln Lanzarote und Fuerteventura mindestens zwei Aufschlussbohrungen bis in eine Tiefe von 3 500 Metern zu treiben, wobei keine maximal zulässige Anzahl an Bohrlöchern festgelegt ist. Es wurde jedoch keine strategische Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung ausgeführt.

1. Die Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms schafft einen Rahmen für die Genehmigung zukünftiger Tiefbohrprojekte, die ihrerseits ebenfalls einer Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung unterliegen. Wurden für die Änderung angesichts dieser Tatsache eine strategische Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung und ein Verfahren der Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung gemäß Richtlinie 2001/41 ausgeführt? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

2. Die vorgenannte Verordnung regelt zukünftige Projekte, die laut zahlreichen wissenschaftlichen Berichten ([2]) mindestens zwei wichtige Vogelschutzgebiete (Important Bird Areas, IBA) ([3]), 25 Seegebiete, 12 Lebensräume und 82 geschützte Arten beeinträchtigen können. Kann die Kommission angesichts dieser Umstände eine Schädigung von Arten und Gebieten, die durch das Netz „Natura 2000" geschützt sind, ausschließen?

3. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die oben genannte Änderung eine Analyse der möglichen Beeinträchtigungen der Küstengewässer gemäß der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (2000/60) umfassen sollte, wohl wissend, dass die durch die Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms geregelten Tätigkeiten schädliche Folgen für Küstengewässer haben können, die für die Bevölkerung von Fuerteventura und Lanzarote beinahe die einzigen Quellen der Wasserversorgung sind?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003665/13
an die Kommission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) und Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Änderung des Explorationsprogramms für Canarias 1-9 (2)

Am 16. März 2012 wurde die Königliche Verordnung 547/2012, durch die eine Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms für die Genehmigungen Canarias 1 bis 9 zur Exploration von Kohlenwasserstoffen verabschiedet wurde, durch die spanische Regierung genehmigt. Diese Änderung erlaubt es den beteiligten Unternehmen ([4]), in einem 660 060 Hektar großen Meeresgebiet vor den Küsten der beiden Kanarischen Inseln Lanzarote und Fuerteventura mindestens zwei Aufschlussbohrungen bis in eine Tiefe von 3 500 Metern zu treiben, wobei keine maximal zulässige Anzahl an Bohrlöchern festgelegt ist. Es wurde jedoch keine strategische Umweltprüfung ausgeführt.

Ist die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass zwar die in der Änderung des Erkundungsprogramms enthaltenen Tätigkeiten in der Prüfung der Meeresstrategie durch Spanien identifiziert, die qualitativen und quantitativen, einheimischen und grenzüberschreitenden Elemente der ermittelten Belastungen und Auswirkungen oder der erkennbaren Tendenzen und ihrer kumulativen und synergetischen Folgen jedoch nicht analysiert wurden, der Meinung, die spanische Regierung hätte die Bedingungen der Meeresstrategie-Rahmenrichtlinie (2008/56) allein durch die Beschreibung der oben genannten Tätigkeiten erfüllt?

([1]) Repsol Investigaciones Petroliferas S.A. (50 %), Woodside Energy Iberia S.A. (30 %) und RWE Dea AG (20 %).
([2]) Von, unter anderem, SEO/BirdLife, OCEANA, SECAC, WWF, SEO/BirdLife, Forschern der Universitäten Hamburg, Galveston (Texas), Barcelona, La Laguna (Teneriffa) und Las Palmas.
([3]) ES0000532 Los Islotes de Lanzarote und ES0000531 Estrecho de La Bocaina.
([4]) Repsol Investigaciones Petroliferas S.A. (50 %), Woodside Energy Iberia S.A. (30 %) und RWE Dea AG (20 %).

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

Mit dem Königlichen Dekret 547/2012 hat Spanien das Königliche Dekret 1462/2001 bestätigt, durch das einem privaten Marktteilnehmer die Genehmigung zur Suche nach Kohlenwasserstoffen erteilt wird. Die betreffenden Erkundungsgenehmigungen können nicht als Pläne oder Programme im Sinne der Richtlinie 2001/42/EG ([5]) betrachtet werden, weil sie keinen Rahmen für die künftige Genehmigung von Förderprojekten in einem bestimmten Sektor setzen, sondern das Prospektionsgebiet abgrenzen und die erforderlichen Investitionen über die Laufzeit des betreffenden Vorhabens ermitteln. Sie unterliegen den Vorschriften für die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung.

Angesichts der Vielzahl der parlamentarischen Anfragen und Beschwerden infolge der Genehmigung des Königlichen Dekrets 547/2012 durch die spanische Regierung hat die Kommission eine Untersuchung in dieser Sache eingeleitet, um sich zu vergewissern, dass die einschlägigen Anforderungen des EU-Umweltrechts eingehalten wurden.

Die spanischen Behörden haben mitgeteilt, dass sie derzeit eine umfassende Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung im Sinne der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU ([6]) (UVP-Richtlinie) vornehmen. Diese UVP sollte alle Umweltaspekte berücksichtigen, insbesondere diejenigen, die sich aus der Richtlinie 92/43/EWG ([7]) (FFH-Richtlinie) ergeben. Daher dürften alle möglichen Auswirkungen auf das Natura-2000-Netz festgestellt werden. Ferner sollte die UVP gemäß der Richtlinie 2000/60/EG ([8]) auch die Maßnahmen berücksichtigen, die zur Vermeidung einer Verschlechterung des Zustands der Küstengewässer erforderlich sind.

Die Richtlinie 2008/56/EG ([9]) sieht vor, dass die Mitgliedstaaten Meeresstrategien entwickeln und umsetzen, die darauf abzielen, dass bis spätestens 2020 ein guter Zustand der Meeresumwelt erreicht wird bzw. erhalten bleibt. Die Kommissionsdienststellen prüfen zurzeit die Anfangsbewertung, die Spanien der Kommission gemäß der Richtlinie 2008/56/EG übermittelt hat.

([5]) Richtlinie 2001/42/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 27. Juni 2001 über die Prüfung der Umweltauswirkungen bestimmter Pläne und Programme, ABl. L 197 vom 21.7.2001.

([6]) ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012 (kodifizierte Fassung der Richtlinie 85/337/EWG über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekten in der geänderten Fassung).

([7]) Richtlinie 92/43/EWG vom 21. Mai 1992 zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wildlebenden Tiere und Pflanzen, ABl. L 206 vom 22.7.1992.

([8]) Richtlinie 2000/60/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. Oktober 2000 zur Schaffung eines Ordnungsrahmens für Maßnahmen der Gemeinschaft im Bereich der Wasserpolitik, ABl. L 327 vom 22.12.2000.

([9]) Richtlinie 2008/56/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Juni 2008 zur Schaffung eines Ordnungsrahmens für Maßnahmen der Gemeinschaft im Bereich der Meeresumwelt (Meeresstrategie-Rahmenrichtlinie), ABl. L 164 vom 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003664/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Modification of the Canarias 1-9 exploratory programme

On 16 March 2012, the Spanish Government approved Royal Decree 547/2012 adopting a modification of the exploratory programme for the Canarias 1-9 hydrocarbon drilling permits. Under this modification, the enterprises involved ([1]) are allowed to drill an indeterminate number of 3 500 metres-deep exploratory wells in a marine area of 660 060 ha off the coasts of the Canary Islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, with a minimum of two wells. However, no strategic environmental impact assessment has been carried out.

1. Given that the modification of the exploratory programme establishes a framework for the authorisation of future projects involving deep drilling, which are themselves subject to environmental impact assessment, has this modification been subject to a strategic environmental impact assessment and a process of public participation, in accordance with Directive 2001/41? If not, why not?

2. Since the abovementioned decree regulates future projects which may, according to a significant number of scientific reports ([2]), affect at least two important bird areas (IBA) ([3]), 25 marine areas, 12 habitats and 82 protected species, can the Commission rule out any damage to species and areas protected by the Natura 2000 network?

3. Knowing that the activities regulated by the modification to the exploratory Programme may affect coastal water bodies which are virtually the only water supply sources for the population of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, does the Commission feel that the abovementioned modification should include an analysis of possible disturbances to the state of coastal water bodies under the Water Framework Directive (2000/60)?

Question for written answer E-003665/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Modification of the exploration programme regarding Canarias 1-9 (2)

On 16 March 2012, the Spanish Government approved Royal Decree 547/2012, which adopted a modification of the investigation programme for the hydrocarbon exploration permits Canarias 1 to 9. With this modification, the undertakings involved ([4]) are allowed to drill an indeterminate number of exploratory wells, 3 500 metres deep, in a marine area of 660 060 hectares, off the coasts of the Canary Islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, with a minimum of two wells. However, no strategic environmental assessment has been carried out.

Given that, while the activities contained in the modification of the investigation Programme have been identified in the assessment of marine strategy by Spain, no analysis has been carried out as regards either the qualitative and quantitative, domestic and cross-border elements of the pressures and impacts recognised or the discernible trends and their cumulative and synergic effects, does the Commission consider that the Spanish Government, merely by describing the aforementioned activities, has complied with the terms of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56)?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

By Royal Decree 547/2012 Spain validates Royal Decree 1462/2001 granting hydrocarbon research permits to a private operator. The referred prospect permits cannot be regarded as plans or programmes within the meaning of Directive 2001/42/EC ([5]) as they do not set the framework for future development consent of exploitation projects in a given sector but delineate the research area and identify the required investments over the prospects lifetime. They are subject to compliance with the requirements under the environmental impact assessment legislation.

([1]) Repsol Investigaciones Petroliferas SA (50%), Woodside Energy Iberia S.A. (30%) and RWE Dea AG (20%).
([2]) By amongst others, SEO/BirdLife, OCEANA, SECAC, WWF, SEO/BirdLife, researchers from the Universities of Hamburg, Galveston (Texas), Barcelona, La Laguna (Tenerife) and Las Palmas.
([3]) ES0000532 Los Islotes de Lanzarote and ES0000531 Estrecho de La Bocaina.
([4]) Repsol Investigaciones Petroliferas AS (50%), Woodside Energy Iberia S.A. (30%) and RWE Dea AG (20%).
([5]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

Pursuant to various parliamentary questions and complaints following adoption of Royal Decree 547/2012 by the Spanish Government, the Commission has launched an investigation on this matter to ensure that the relevant requirements under EU environmental law have been complied with.

The Spanish authorities have informed that they are currently conducting a full environmental impact assessment in the terms of Directive 2011/92/UE ([6]) (EIA Directive). This EIA should take into account all environmental aspects and in particular those arising from Directive 92/43/EEC ([7]) (Habitats Directive). It should therefore identify any potential impact on the Natura 2000 network. The EIA should also include the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of coastal water bodies, as required by Directive 2000/60/EC ([8]).

Directive 2008/56/EC ([9]) requires that Member States develop and implement marine strategies aiming at achieving or maintaining good environmental status in the marine environment by 2020 at the latest. The Commission services are currently examining the initial assessment sent by Spain according to Directive 2008/56/EC.

([6]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012 (codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended).

([7]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora — OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

([8]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy — OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

([9]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) — OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003666/13
à la Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(28 mars 2013)

Objet: Application du règlement nº 1/2005 sur les transports d'animaux

Pour le transport d'animaux destinés à l'abattage d'une durée supérieure à 8 heures, le règlement nº 1/2005 exige de la part de l'autorité compétente de l'État membre de départ qu'elle fournisse plusieurs informations à l'autorité compétente de l'État membre d'arrivée (via les messages Traces).

Ces informations concernent le lieu de départ, le lieu de destination, le temps d'attente et une estimation du trajet. Alertées de l'arrivée d'un transport d'animaux de longue distance, les autorités de l'État d'arrivée peuvent ainsi réaliser des contrôles inopinés.

Toutefois, dans la pratique, ces messages Traces sont volontairement envoyés trop tard, c'est-à-dire après que le transport est arrivé à destination, ce qui empêche la tenue de contrôles vétérinaires lors du débarquement des animaux arrivés à destination et l'application du règlement nº 1/2005.

1. Selon la Commission, comment une autorité compétente du lieu de destination du transport peut-elle organiser des contrôles si elle n'a pas reçu les informations nécessaires sur le transport via le système Traces?

2. La Commission dispose-t-elle d'informations quant au nombre de transports de longue distance qui ne sont pas notifiés ou qui le sont trop tard, c'est-à-dire après l'arrivée du transport, aux autorités compétentes du lieu de destination?

3. Quelles mesures la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de prendre pour garantir que les autorités du lieu de départ dans les États membres appliquent correctement le règlement nº 1/2005 en transmettant les messages Traces aux autorités compétentes du lieu de destination?

4. Quelles sont les sanctions prévues dans les États membres à l'encontre des autorités qui ne transmettent pas les informations adéquates sur les transports de longue distance aux autorités du lieu de destination? Des sanctions ont-elles déjà été mises en œuvre?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

1. Conformément à la législation de l'UE sur les échanges intracommunautaires d'animaux vivants ([1]) ([2]), Traces a été établi en vue de garantir l'échange d'informations sous une forme numérique des certificats sanitaires accompagnant les animaux, le jour de leur délivrance par l'autorité compétente de l'État membre d'origine.

Lorsqu'un carnet de route doit être délivré ([3]) conformément à la législation de l'UE sur le bien-être des animaux pendant leur transport ([4]), l'autorité compétente du lieu de départ «communique dès que possible les modalités des voyages de longue durée prévus mentionnés dans le carnet de route à l'autorité compétente du lieu de destination, du point de sortie ou du poste de contrôle au moyen du système d'échange d'informations visé à l'article 20 de la directive 90/425/CEE» ([5]).

Bien que les informations concernant le carnet de route reçues par l'intermédiaire de Traces puissent être utiles à l'autorité compétente du lieu de destination, il faut souligner que la majorité des opérations de transport dans l'UE consistent en des déplacements de moins de huit heures qui s'effectuent sans carnet de route et que les contrôles officiels sont réalisés par les États membres, même lorsque ceux-ci ne sont pas en possession de ces informations.

([1]) Directive 90/425/CEE du Conseil relative aux contrôles vétérinaires et zootechniques applicables dans les échanges intracommunautaires de certains animaux vivants et produits dans la perspective de la réalisation du marché intérieur, JO L 224 du 18.8.1990, p. 29.
([2]) Décision 2003/623/CE de la Commission concernant le développement d'un système informatique vétérinaire intégré dénommé Traces, JO L 216 du 28.8.2003, p. 58.
([3]) Selon l'article 5, paragraphe 4, du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 relatif à la protection des animaux pendant leur transport, des carnets de route sont délivrés lorsque des équidés non enregistrés, des bovins, des ovins, des caprins et des porcins sont transportés sur de longues distances entre États membres et en provenance et à destination de pays tiers.
([4]) Règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport et les opérations annexes, JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([5]) Conformément à l'article 14, point d), du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005.

2. La Commission ne dispose pas des informations demandées. Cependant, la direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs de la Commission s'assure du respect de cette obligation par les États membres par l'entremise de l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV). Ces audits n'ont pas établi la preuve que l'autorité compétente du lieu de départ refuse délibérément de communiquer ces informations.

3. Dans ces conditions, la Commission ne prévoit aucune action concernant l'envoi d'informations sur les carnets de route via le système Traces.

4. La législation de l'UE n'autorise pas les États membres à prendre des sanctions à l'encontre des autorités d'autres États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003666/13
to the Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Implementation of Regulation No 1/2005 on the transport of animals

With regard to the transport of animals intended for slaughter on journeys exceeding eight hours, Regulation No 1/2005 requires the competent authority of the Member State of departure to provide various information to the competent authority of the Member State of arrival (via TRACES messages).

This information concerns the place of departure, the place of destination, the waiting time and estimated journey time. Having been notified of the arrival of animals being transported over a long distance, the authorities of the State of arrival may carry out spot checks.

However, in practice, these TRACES messages are deliberately sent too late, namely after the animals have been transported to their destination, thereby preventing the performance of veterinary checks on the animals when they are unloaded at their destination, and the implementation of Regulation No 1/2005.

1. How does the Commission believe that a competent authority of the place of destination can organise controls if it does not receive the necessary information regarding the transport via the TRACES system?

2. Does the Commission possess information regarding the number of long-distance journeys which are not notified to the competent authorities of the place of destination, or which are notified too late (namely after the animals have arrived)?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the authorities of the place of departure in the Member States correctly implement Regulation No 1/2005 by sending TRACES messages to the competent authorities of the place of destination?

4. What sanctions are provided for in the Member States against authorities that do not send the appropriate information regarding long-distance transport to the authorities of the place of destination? Have any sanctions already been imposed?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. In accordance with EU legislation on intra-EU trade in live animals ([1]) ([2]), TRACES has been developed to ensure the exchange of information in a digital format of animal health certificates accompanying the animals on the day on which they were issued by the competent authority of the Member State of origin.

When a journey log is to be issued ([3]) according to EU legislation on animal welfare during transport ([4]) competent authorities of place of departure shall 'send details as soon as possible of the intended long journeys set out in the journey log to the competent authority of the place of destination, of the exit point or of the control post via the information exchange system referred to in Article 20 of Directive 90/425/EEC' ([5]).

Although information concerning the journey log received via TRACES may be helpful for competent authorities at place of destination, it must be highlighted that the majority of transports in the EU (which concerns journeys shorter than eight hours) are carried out without a journey log and official controls are carried out by Member States even when they are not in possession of such information.

([1]) Council Directive 90/425/EEC concerning the veterinary and zootechnical checks applicable in intra-Community trade in certain live animals and products with a view to the completion of the internal market, OJ L 224, 18.8.1990, p. 29.
([2]) Commission Decision 2003/623/EC concerning the development of an integrated computerised veterinary system known as Traces, OJ L 216, 28.8.2003, p.58.
([3]) According to Article 5(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, journey logs shall be issued when non-registered horses, cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are transported on long journeys between Member States and with third countries.
([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations; OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([5]) According to Article 14(d) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

2. The Commission does not have the requested information. However, Member States' compliance with this requirement is audited by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO). These audits have not revealed that competent authorities of place of departure deliberately are withholding this information.

3. In light of the above, the Commission does not foresee any actions in relation to the sending of the details of the journey log via TRACES messages.

4. EU legislation does not foresee that Member States may impose sanctions on authorities in other Member States.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003667/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Vredesplan Midden-Oosten

Volgens mediabronnen heeft de Europese Unie het idee opgevat om, in samenspraak met een aantal Arabische landen, een gedetailleerd plan op te stellen om het vastgelopen vredesproces tussen Israël en de Palestijnen vlot te trekken. Dit plan zou na de vorming van een Israëlische regering — ondertussen gebeurd — rond maart 2013 worden voorgesteld. Het plan is oorspronkelijk een initiatief van Verenigd Koninkrijk en Frankrijk en wordt gesteund door Duitsland. De Hoge Vertegenwoordiger zou ook onderzoeken of het plan als een alomvattend Europees voorstel kan worden gelanceerd.

Bovendien heeft de Raad in zijn conclusies van december 2012 benadrukt dat de tijd rijp is om met het oog op vrede doortastend op te treden, en gewezen op de urgentie van hernieuwde, gestructureerde en substantiële vredesinspanningen in 2013.

In deze context de volgende vragen:

Zal de EU een alomvattend plan voorstellen om het vredesproces tussen Israël en de Palestijnen vlot te trekken? Wat is de stand van zaken met betrekking tot dit plan en wanneer zal dit plan worden gepresenteerd?

Wat is de inhoud van het plan? Op welke gronden zal het steunen?

Indien er geen plan op komst is: om welke redenen is het idee van Frankrijk en het Verenigd Koninkrijk niet doorgezet?

Gelet op de Raadsconclusies van december 2012, die 2013 als het jaar van concrete vredesinspanningen aanduiden: wanneer en met welke concrete maatregelen zal de EU in 2013 actie ondernemen om het vredesoverleg in het Midden-Oosten weer op gang te trekken?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(23 mei 2013)

De EU is zeer ingenomen met de recente inspanningen van de partijen en van andere belangrijke actoren om inhoudelijke en gestructureerde onderhandelingen op te starten die zijn gericht op een alomvattende oplossing van het Israëlisch-Palestijnse conflict. De EU looft en steunt de huidige diplomatieke inspanningen van de Verenigde Staten om dit proces te bevorderen. De EU gelooft dat een beslissende doorbraak binnen handbereik ligt en spoedig zal worden bereikt. Deze langverwachte nieuwe kans moet worden gegrepen.

De EU is bereid deze inspanningen actief en concreet te ondersteunen met alle instrumenten waarover zij beschikt. De nadruk die de EU de voorbije maanden heeft gelegd op de economische ontwikkeling in de bezette Palestijnse gebieden — met name in zone C van de Westelijke Jordaanoever — is volledig in overeenstemming met de opties en initiatieven die worden besproken. De Europese Unie is bereid haar steun verder op te voeren om bij te dragen tot een geslaagde hervatting van rechtstreekse onderhandelingen ten gronde.

Indien een akkoord wordt bereikt dat een einde brengt aan dit decennialange conflict, zou dit het pad effenen voor een intensievere en betere samenwerking tussen de Europese Unie en alle landen in de regio. Deze samenwerking zou voordelig zijn voor alle betrokken partijen en bijdragen tot het vooruitzicht op een nieuw tijdperk van vrede en welvaart in het Midden-Oosten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003667/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Peace plan for the Middle East

According to media sources, the European Union has had the idea, in dialogue with a number of Arab countries, of drawing up a detailed plan to reinvigorate the stalled peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. This plan was to be presented around March 2013, following the formation of an Israeli Government, which has since taken place. The plan was originally an initiative by the United Kingdom and France and was supported by Germany. The High Representative was also supposed to investigate whether the plan could be launched as an all-embracing European proposal.

Moreover, in its conclusions of December 2012 the Council stressed that now is the time to take bold steps towards peace and underlined the urgency of renewed, structured and substantial peace efforts in 2013.

Is the EU going to put forward an all-embracing European proposal to reinvigorate the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians? What news is there with regard to the said plan and when will it be presented?

What are the contents of the plan? What is it to be based on?

If there is no plan on the way, then why has the idea put forward by France and the United Kingdom not been acted on?

With regard to the Council Conclusions of December 2012, which names 2013 as the year for tangible peace efforts: when, and through what specific measures, is the EU going to take action in 2013 in order to get the peace talks in the Middle East back on track?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The EU warmly welcomes the latest efforts by the parties and by other key actors to try to re-launch substantial and structured negotiations aiming at a comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The EU commends and supports the diplomatic efforts currently deployed by the United States to facilitate this process. The EU believes that a decisive breakthrough is within reach and must take place very soon. This long-awaited new opportunity must be seized.

The EU stands ready to give active and concrete support to these efforts, with all the instruments at its disposal. The emphasis that the EU has placed in recent months on economic development in the occupied Palestinian territory — in particular in Area C of the West Bank — is fully in line with the options and initiatives currently under discussion. The European Union is ready and willing to take its support to the next level, to help ensure that resumed direct substantial negotiations between the parties are successful.

If an agreement to finally end this conflict that has lasted for decades was reached, the door would open to a deepened and enhanced cooperation between the European Union and all the countries of the region, bringing benefits to all involved and contributing to the prospect of a new era of peace and prosperity throughout the Middle East.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003668/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Etikettering van Israëlische en nederzettingenproducten

Met betrekking tot de etikettering van Israëlische en nederzettingenproducten vermelden de Raadsconclusies van december 2012 over het Midden-Oosten vredesproces dat „[d]e Europese Unie en haar lidstaten […] de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van mei 2012 [memoreren], en herhalen zich te beijveren voor de volledige, doeltreffende uitvoering van de bestaande Uniewetgeving en bilaterale overeenkomsten die op uit de nederzettingen afkomstige producten van toepassing zijn." Concreet komt het erop neer dat volgens de vigerende wetgeving de Europese consument het onderscheid moet kunnen maken tussen producten uit Israël zelf en producten uit de nederzettingen (Westelijke Jordaanoever, de Golanhoogten en Oost-Jeruzalem). Volgens die Europese wetgeving hoeft de herkomst van producten niet altijd vermeld te worden. Europese richtlijnen leggen vast voor welke producten dit verplicht is (vers fruit en groenten, enkele andere voedingsproducten zoals honing, olijfolie, wijn of cosmetica) en voor welke niet. Bovendien is etikettering de verantwoordelijkheid van de handelaar en niet van de producent. Vaak zijn handelaars zich echter niet bewust van de nederzettingenproblematiek, waardoor ze deze producten niet juist etiketteren.

In hoeverre vindt de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de Uniewetgeving afdoende duidelijk en precies? Zijn er producten die volgens de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger een betere etiketteringsbescherming behoeven? Zo ja, hoe kan deze betere bescherming worden afgedwongen?

Als de oorsprong vermeld wordt op het product — al dan niet verplicht -, dan moet die correct zijn. De EU-richtlijn over foutieve of misleidende etikettering betreft daarom alle producten in alle sectoren. Dit moet duidelijk gemaakt worden in een advies aan de handelaren die zich geconfronteerd zien met producten uit Israël resp. de nederzettingen. Is de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger het met deze stelling eens en zal zij dergelijk advies uitvaardigen?

Steunt de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger het recente initiatief van Nederland, in navolging van het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Denemarken, waar labels op producten in de toekomst duidelijk moeten aangeven of ze uit Israël dan wel uit de nederzettingen in Palestijns gebied afkomstig zijn? Zal de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger instructies aan de lidstaten geven het Nederlandse voorbeeld te volgen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(19 juni 2013)

De Commissie is van mening dat de bestaande EU-wetgeving op dit vlak duidelijk en precies genoeg is. Hoewel de tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-wetgeving inzake oorsprongsetikettering de verantwoordelijkheid van de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten is, heeft de Commissie alle lidstaten gewezen op het belang van de volledige en effectieve uitvoering van de etiketteringswetgeving van de EU in het geval van Israël en op de noodzaak om de inspanningen van de bevoegde autoriteiten op dat vlak op te voeren. De recente initiatieven van het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Denemarken zijn volledig in overeenstemming met de EU-wetgeving. De Commissie zal zich inzetten voor EU-richtsnoeren die zorgen voor een coherentere uitvoering van de betreffende EU-wetgeving en een betere samenhang ervan met het buitenlands beleid van de EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003668/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Labelling of Israeli and settlement products

With regard to the labelling of Israeli and settlement products, the Council Conclusions of December 2012 on the Middle East peace process state that 'The European Union and its Member States [recall the] Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions adopted in May 2012 [and] reiterate their commitment to ensure continued, full and effective implementation of existing European Union legislation and bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products.' In practice, this boils down to the fact that under the legislation in force, European consumers must be able to tell the difference between products from Israel itself and products from the settlements (the West Bank, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem). According to European legislation, the origin of products does not always have to be specified. European directives lay down for which products it is required (fresh fruit and vegetables and a few other food products such as honey, olive oil and wine, as well as cosmetics) and for which it is not. Moreover, labelling is the responsibility of the merchant and not the producer. However, merchants are often not aware of the issue of the settlements, as a result of which they fail to label these products correctly.

To what extent does the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy consider the Union legislation to be sufficiently clear and precise? Are there products that the High Representative believes require better labelling protection? If so, how can this better protection be enforced?

Where a product bears its origin — whether or not this is required — that origin must be correctly specified. The EU Directive on inaccurate or misleading labelling does apply to all products in all sectors, after all. This needs to be made clear in advice issued to merchants faced with products from Israel or the settlements. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree, and will she issue advice to that effect?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative support the recent initiative by the Netherlands, following in the footsteps of the United Kingdom and Denmark, whereby future product labels will have to make clear whether they originate in Israel or the settlements in the Palestinian territories? Will the Vice-President/High Representative instruct the Member States to follow the Dutch example?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

The Commission considers that existing EU legislation on these matters is sufficiently clear and precise. However, while implementation of EU legislation on origin labelling is the responsibility of member states' competent authorities, the Commission has urged all member states to pay close attention to the significance of the full and effective enforcement of EU labelling legislation in the case of Israel and the need for enhanced efforts on the part of competent authorities to that end. Recent initiatives by the UK and Denmark are fully in line with EU legislation. The Commission is committed to work on preparing EU-wide guidelines that would strengthen the coherent implementation of relevant EU legislation and its consistency with EU foreign policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003669/13
à Comissão
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Programa POSEI Pescas e o FEAMP

No âmbito da reforma da Política Comum das Pescas, estamos neste momento a debater, no Parlamento Europeu, o futuro regulamento sobre o Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas (FEAMP). Este novo regulamento irá substituir o atual Fundo Europeu das Pescas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 1198/2006), em conformidade com o estipulado na proposta de regulamento que estabelece regras comuns para os fundos em regime de gestão partilhada (2011/0276 (COD)) e com a proposta da Comissão Europeia (2011/0380 (COD)) relativa a este Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas.

Esta é uma matéria que interessa e preocupa os profissionais da pesca de regiões como os Açores, onde o setor desempenha um papel fundamental na economia local e é sustento para um grande número de famílias que dependem da atividade piscatória. Em virtude das características específicas desta região, está em vigor, no atual período de programação, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 do Conselho de 21 de maio, designado vulgarmente por POSEI Pescas, programa que, quer pela sua configuração para o tratamento dos problemas específicos das regiões ultraperiféricas, quer pelo conjunto de medidas e soluções que comporta, é da maior importância para todos os profissionais da pesca e respetivas organizações nos Açores.

Neste âmbito, gostaria que a Comissão esclarecesse, de forma clara e objetiva, se pretende ou não extinguir o regime de compensação dos custos suplementares relativos ao escoamento de determinados produtos da pesca das regiões ultraperiféricas dos Açores, da Madeira, das ilhas Canárias, da Guiana Francesa e da Reunião (Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 do Conselho de 21 de maio) como um regulamento específico para as regiões ultraperiféricas, e inseri-lo no novo regulamento sobre o FEAMP. Se sim, porque o faz e como pretende fazê-lo?

Admite a Comissão poder manter o regulamento autónomo no futuro, dada a enorme relevância que o mesmo assume para as populações dessas regiões?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

O Senhor Deputado faz referência ao Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 como forma de compensar os custos suplementares relativos ao escoamento de determinados produtos da pesca das regiões ultraperiféricas dos Açores, da Madeira, das ilhas Canárias, da Guiana Francesa e da Reunião ([1]).

A Comissão reconhece as necessidades específicas das regiões ultraperiféricas e a necessidade de ter em conta os condicionalismos geográficos e económicos específicos que estas regiões enfrentam. A Comissão está empenhada no regime de compensação para as pescas acima mencionado e apenas o integrou no FEAMP para simplificar a sua aplicação pelos Estados-Membros e para aumentar a sua eficiência.

Considerando que o pedido de um instrumento jurídico separado para a continuação do regime de compensação para as pescas, a Comissão irá analisar esta questão com vista a encontrar uma abordagem comum para os diferentes fundos a nível da UE.

([1]) JO L 176 de 6.7.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003669/13
to the Commission
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: POSEI Fisheries programme and the EMFF

Given that the common fisheries policy is in the process of reform, Parliament is now debating the future regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which is to replace the present European Fisheries Fund (Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006), as has been provided for in the proposal for a regulation laying down common provisions on the funds under shared management (2011/0276(COD)) and in the Commission proposal (2011/0380(COD)) on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

This is a matter of interest and concern to fishing operators in, for example, the Azores, a region where the fisheries sector plays a key role in the local economy and affords a livelihood to the many families who depend on fishing. The region's particular characteristics are being covered, in the current programming period, by Council Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 of 21 May 2007, commonly known as POSEI Fisheries, a scheme which, both because it is designed to deal with problems specific to the outermost regions and because of the measures and solutions that it offers, is vitally important to Azorean fishing operators in general and the organisations which represent them.

Can the Commission say, clearly and precisely, whether it intends to do away with the scheme to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions, namely the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, French Guiana, and Réunion, which, under Council Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 of 21 May 2007, has hitherto constituted a special arrangement for those regions, and whether it will instead incorporate the corresponding provisions into the new EMFF regulation? If that is the Commission's intention, what is the reason for it and how will it be realised?

Could the Commission allow the self-contained regulation to remain in force in the future, given its immense importance to the people of the outermost regions?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions of Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, French Guiana and Réunion ([1]).

The Commission recognises the special needs of the outermost regions and the need to take account of the specific geographical and economic handicaps that the outermost regions have to face. The Commission is committed to the abovementioned fisheries compensation scheme and has only integrated it into the EMFF to simplify its implementation by the Member States and to increase efficiency.

Considering the request for a separate legal instrument for the continuation of the fisheries compensation scheme the Commission will look into this issue with a view to finding a common approach for the different funds at EU level.

([1]) OJ L 176, 6.7.2007.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003670/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Respuesta al trato fiscal diferenciado de los clubes de fútbol en España

En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta parlamentaria E-011276/2012, *presentada el 10 de diciembre de l año pasado, sobre el trato fiscal privilegiado de los clubes de fútbol de España, la Comisión sostuvo que había solicitado información a las autoridades españolas y que se encontraba analizando dicha información.*

Han *llegado a la opinión pública nuevos casos de interés con respecto a esta pregunta, como el caso de la Comunidad Valenciana, que se ha convertido en accionista del Valencia, el Hércules y el Elche, al haberse ofrecido en el pasado como avalistas de dichos clubes deportivos. Así, dicho Gobierno autonómico, ha asumido 118 millones de euros de deuda de los clubes citados mientras acapara los instrumentos de financiación de deuda autonómica del Estado.*

Según fuentes de diversos medios de información, *la Comisión ya recibió la información solicitada a las autoridades españolas. Tras haber pasado un plazo prudente y al carecer de cualquier tipo de comunicación ni anuncio alguno por parte de la Comisión nos vemos obligados a volver sobre el mismo tema.*

¿Podría informarme la Comisión sobre el análisis de la información que le solicitó a las autoridades españolas?

¿Considera la Comisión que dichos clubes deportivos reciben un trato fiscal igualitario en comparación con el resto de clubes europeos, así como con respecto a otros actores económicos españoles? ¿Qué opinión le suscita? ¿Tolera que se asuma nueva deuda pública para avalar clubes de fútbol? ¿Qué líneas de actuación plantea?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

En lo referente al trato fiscal diferenciado a los clubes de fútbol en España, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-011276/2012, de 15 de febrero de 2013.

La investigación sigue en curso y la Comisión aún no está en condiciones de poder realizar observaciones en relación con las cuestiones planteadas por Su Señoría, ni tampoco prever la duración de la misma.

La Comisión está al corriente de los informes que advierten de esas posibles ayudas estatales concedidas a clubes de fútbol en Valencia y ha solicitado más información a las autoridades españolas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003670/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Response to different tax treatment for football clubs in Spain

In the Commission's answer to my previous Written Question E-011276/2012, submitted on 10 December 2012, on preferential tax treatment for football clubs in Spain, it maintained that it had asked the Spanish authorities for information and that it was analysing this information.

New cases relevant to this question have now come to light, such as the case of the autonomous community of Valencia, which has become a shareholder in the Valencia, Hércules and Elche football clubs, having in the past acted as guarantor for these sports clubs. This autonomous government has thereby taken on EUR 118 million in debt from these clubs whilst monopolising the State's autonomous debt financing instruments.

According to various sources, the Commission has already received the information it requested from the Spanish authorities. After having waited for a reasonable period of time and in the absence of any kind of communication or announcement from the Commission, we are forced to return to the same topic.

Could the Commission provide an update on the analysis of the information it requested from the Spanish authorities?

Does the Commission believe that these sports clubs are receiving equal tax treatment in comparison with other European clubs, as well as with other Spanish economic actors? What is the Commission's opinion? Will it tolerate the taking on of new public debt to guarantee football clubs? What lines of action would it suggest?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Regarding preferential tax treatment of football clubs in Spain, the Commission refers to its answer of 15 February 2013 given to Written Question E-011276/2012.

The investigation is still ongoing and the Commission is not yet in a position to comment on its possible outcome of the issues raised by the Honourable Member, or on the length of time the investigation will last.

The Commission is aware of reports regarding possible state aid to football clubs in Valencia. It has asked the Spanish authorities for more information.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003671/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η απόφαση του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο

Η επιμονή του Eurogroup να αλλάξει τα πάντα σε μία εβδομάδα όσον αφορά το οικονομικό μοντέλο της Κύπρου και ουσιαστικά να συρρικνώσει σε λίγα εικοσιτετράωρα το μέγεθος του τραπεζικού της συστήματος, δείχνει έλλειψη πολιτικής ωριμότητας και κοινοτικής αλληλεγγύης. Αν πραγματικά κάποιοι στο Eurogroup ήθελαν να βοηθήσουν την Κύπρο, όπως υποστηρίζουν, θα μπορούσαν να θέσουν όρους και χρονοδιαγράμματα ούτως ώστε, μέσα από μια ορθολογιστική και κυρίως ανθρώπινη διαδικασία, να γίνουν οι επιβεβλημένες αλλαγές. Η λύση που επέλεξαν, στην πραγματικότητα, όχι μόνο δεν λύνει τα προβλήματα, αλλά διαλύει την κυπριακή οικονομία, καταστρέφει την Κύπρο ως χρηματοπιστωτικό κέντρο και συνθλίβει τη μικρή κοινωνία της Κύπρου. Η διάλυση τραπεζών, η πτώχευση εκατοντάδων εταιρειών οδηγούν σε πολλαπλασιασμό της ανεργίας, μετατρέποντας την οικονομική κρίση σε κοινωνική. Οδηγούν χιλιάδες οικογένειες στη φτώχεια και την εξαθλίωση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Τι προτείνει για να αποτρέψει την πλήρη καταστροφή της Κύπρου;

— Πώς μπορεί να στηρίξει τους συνταξιούχους που θα μείνουν χωρίς συντάξεις, αφού τα ταμεία προνοίας θα κουρευτούν;

— Πώς σταματά την ανερχόμενη ανεργία ανάμεσα στους νέους με τα υψηλά ακαδημαϊκά προσόντα, όταν συνθλίβει τις θέσεις εργασίας σε επαγγέλματα συναφή με το υπάρχον μοντέλο οικονομίας (λογιστές, οικονομολόγοι, χρηματιστές κ.λπ.), το οποίο τόσο αψυχολόγητα και άδικα έχει καταστρέψει το Eurogroup;

— Πώς σταματά τον αυξανόμενο ευρωσκεπτικισμό για όσα καταστροφικά συμβαίνουν στον Ευρωπαϊκό Νότο, όταν οι λαοί βλέπουν πως το Eurogroup επιβάλλει πολιτικές για την ευημερία των αριθμών αφήνοντας τους λαούς να πένονται;

— Πώς αντιλαμβάνεται η Επιτροπή την κοινοτική αλληλεγγύη και πώς μπορεί έμπρακτα να βοηθήσει μια μικρή χώρα μέλος της, που δεν ζητιάνευε παρά μόνο ζητούσε ένα μικρό δάνειο μόλις 5,8 δισεκατομμυρίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαΐου 2013)

Τα προβλήματα της Κύπρου συσσωρεύονται εδώ και πολλά χρόνια. Το βασικό πρόβλημα ήταν ένας υπερβολικά διογκωμένος τραπεζικός τομέας που αναπτύχθηκε χάρη στην προσέλκυση ξένων καταθέσεων με πολύ ευνοϊκούς όρους. Αυτές οι ροές κεφαλαίων συνέβαλαν επίσης στην εκρηκτική ανάπτυξη της αγοράς ακινήτων και στη συσσώρευση εξωτερικών ανισορροπιών. Το μέγεθος των τραπεζικών προβλημάτων οφείλεται στις πρακτικές ανεπαρκούς διαχείρισης κινδύνων. Λόγω της έλλειψης επαρκούς εποπτείας, οι δύο μεγαλύτερες τράπεζες αφέθηκαν να συσσωρεύσουν τεράστια ανοίγματα.

Η Επιτροπή δεν υποτιμά τις δύσκολες προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα, και θα κάνει ό,τι είναι δυνατό για να βοηθήσει την Κύπρο στις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλει για να αναπτύξει ένα πιο διαφοροποιημένο και βιώσιμο οικονομικό μοντέλο, να αμβλύνει τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες του οικονομικού κλονισμού και να μετριάσει τις επιπτώσεις στα πλέον ευάλωτα άτομα, κυρίως με τη σύσταση της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο.

Η ομάδα στήριξης θα βοηθήσει τις κυπριακές αρχές να έχουν ταχεία πρόσβαση στις σχετικές διαθέσιμες πηγές χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων συνοχής/διαρθρωτικής πολιτικής. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος στήριξης, η Κύπρος θα μπορεί να ζητεί υψηλότερα ποσοστά προχρηματοδότησης για μελλοντικές αιτήσεις χρηματοδότησης από διάφορα Ταμεία και «συμπληρωματικό» ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης 10% για την πολιτική συνοχής και την αγροτική ανάπτυξη.

Τα προγράμματα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ θα βοηθήσουν στην αναβάθμιση των δεξιοτήτων και στην εκ νέου επιμόρφωση για τη διευκόλυνση των μεταβολών στην αγορά εργασίας και της επανένταξης των εργαζομένων που έχουν απολυθεί.

Η αλληλεγγύη βρισκόταν πάντα στο επίκεντρο των δράσεων της Επιτροπής και θα σφραγίσει τη μελλοντική συνεργασία με την Κύπρο ώστε να στηριχθεί η δημιουργία βιώσιμου οικονομικού και κοινωνικού προτύπου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003671/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision on Cyprus

The Eurogroup's persistence in changing everything with regards to the Cypriot financial model in the space of one week and, essentially, reducing the size of the Cypriot banking system in a few days, indicates a lack of political maturity and social solidarity. If some members of the Eurogroup really wanted to help Cyprus, as they claimed they did, they could have set conditions and timetables, through a rational and, above all, humane process, to enable the required changes to be made. The solution they actually chose not only fails to solve the problems but dismantles the Cypriot economy, destroys Cyprus as a financial centre and crushes its small society. The dismantling of banks and the bankruptcy of hundreds of companies are leading to a rise in unemployment, transforming the financial crisis into a social crisis. They are driving thousands of families into poverty and destitution.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What does it intend to do to prevent the complete destruction of Cyprus?

— How can it support pensioners who will be without pensions, as welfare funds will be cut?

— How will it stop rising unemployment amongst young people with high academic qualifications, when jobs are being eradicated from professions related to the economic model (accountants, economists, brokers etc.) which the Eurogroup has so carelessly and unfairly destroyed?

— How will it stop the increasing Euroscepticism surrounding these destructive events in southern Europe when the public can see how the Eurogroup is imposing policies to boost figures, leaving people to starve?

— What does the Commission understand by social solidarity and how can it effectively help one of its small Member States, which did not beg but merely asked for a small loan of EUR 5.8 billion?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The problems of Cyprus build up over many years. At their heart was an oversized banking sector that thrived on attracting foreign deposits with very favourable conditions. These capital flows also contributed to a property boom and the accumulation of external imbalances. The depth of banking problems stemmed from the poor practices of risk management. Lacking adequate oversight, the two largest banks were allowed to build up far too concentrated exposures.

The Commission does not underestimate the difficult challenges facing the country, and it will do everything possible to assist Cyprus in its efforts to develop a more diversified and sustainable economic model, alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock and mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable people, including with the establishment of the Support Group of Cyprus.

The Support Group will help the Cypriot authorities to rapidly access the relevant sources of funding available under the cohesion/structural policy programmes. Under the assistance programme, Cyprus will be able to request higher pre-financing rates for future applications to various Fund allocations and a 10% 'top-up' co-financing rate for cohesion policy and rural development.

EU co-funded programmes help provide skill upgrades and re-training to ease labour market transitions and facilitate the reinsertion of workers that are made redundant.

Solidarity has always been central to the Commission's actions and it will be the hallmark of future work with Cyprus to help the emergence of a sustainable economic and social model.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003672/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Energy Efficiency Directive

Under the new Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are encouraged to carry out an energy audit. Member States may set up support schemes, including to cover costs both of an energy audit and of the implementation of the audit recommendations.

I would like to know if there are statistics available on the number of SMEs that benefited from this, particularly in the UK.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The new Energy Efficiency Directive ([1]) entered into force on 5 December 2012. Member States have until 5 June 2014 to transpose most of the provisions of this directive, including those encouraging energy audits in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). At present, Member States are designing the national transposition measures. It is therefore too early to have statistics on support schemes in the UK that may be set up to cover costs of energy audits and/or of the implementation of the audit recommendations.

([1]) Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC, OJ L 315, 14.11.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003673/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μεταφορά ζώων σε μακρινές αποστάσεις από την ΕΕ στην Τουρκία

Εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες πρόβατα και βοοειδή (προοριζόμενα για σφαγή και αναπαραγωγή) μεταφέρονται κάθε χρόνο σε μεγάλες αποστάσεις από κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ στην Τουρκία. Αναφορές από ΜΚΟ, στηριζόμενες από εμπειρικά στοιχεία, έχουν καταδείξει ότι αυτά τα ταξίδια μακρινών αποστάσεων προκαλούν τεράστια δεινά στα ζώα. Ο εξαιρετικά μεγάλος χρόνος μεταφοράς — που συχνά επιμηκύνεται από τεράστιες καθυστερήσεις, ενίοτε διάρκειας ολόκληρων ημερών, εντός ή πλησίον των συνόρων μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Τουρκίας — είναι συχνά το αποτέλεσμα μη ορθών/ατελών συνοδευτικών εγγράφων που εκδόθηκαν από τις αρμόδιες αρχές των κρατών μελών αναχώρησης.

Η ΜΚΟ Animals' Angels έχει τεκμηριώσει επανειλημμένως το γεγονός ότι τα ζώα συχνά υποφέρουν, εξαιτίας αυτής της μεταφοράς σε μακρινές αποστάσεις, από αφυδάτωση και υποσιτισμό, σοβαρές αναπνευστικές διαταραχές, θερμική επιβάρυνση και εξάντληση. Έχει τεκμηριωθεί ένας σημαντικός αριθμός ζώων που δεν επέζησαν της μεταφοράς σε μεγάλη απόσταση. Ο κανονισμός του Συμβουλίου (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005 για την προστασία των ζώων κατά τη μεταφορά βρίσκεται σε ισχύ εδώ και πέντε χρόνια τώρα. Ωστόσο, το 2013 οι σχετικοί νόμοι της ΕΕ εξακολουθούν να μην εφαρμόζονται από τα κράτη μέλη, ενώ έχουν υπάρξει αποδεδειγμένα και διάφορα περιστατικά παράτυπης μεταφοράς για τα οποία έχει δοθεί άδεια από κράτη μέλη. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θα πρέπει να εντείνει τις προσπάθειές της ώστε να διασφαλίσει την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005 και την πραγματική προστασία των ζώων κατά τη μεταφορά.

Βάσει των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πόσα ζωντανά βοοειδή και προβατοειδή εξήχθησαν από κράτη μέλη (με ταξινόμηση ανά κράτος μέλος) στην Τουρκία τα έτη 2009, 2010, 2011 και 2012;

— Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διορθώσει τη συστηματική και διαρκή μη εφαρμογή, από τα κράτη μέλη αναχώρησης, του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005 στο πλαίσιο της μεταφοράς ζώων προς την Τουρκία;

— Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διορθώσει τη συστηματική και διαρκή μη εφαρμογή, από τις αρμόδιες βουλγαρικές αρχές, του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005 στο σημείο εξόδου της ΕΕ Kapitan Andreevo στα σύνορα της ΕΕ με την Τουρκία;

— Σε συνάφεια με τις ερωτήσεις 2 και 3, ποια θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι είναι η κατάλληλη προθεσμία που θα πρέπει να δοθεί στα κράτη μέλη και εντός της οποίας θα πρέπει επιτέλους να επιβάλουν την εφαρμογή του κανονισμού του Συμβουλίου (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

1. Βλ. παραρτήματα.

2. Για να βελτιωθεί η επιβολή της νομοθεσίας κατά τη μεταφορά ζώων από την ΕΕ στην Τουρκία, η Επιτροπή, σε πολλές περιπτώσεις, έχει υπενθυμίσει στα κράτη μέλη τις υποχρεώσεις τους ως προς την ορθή εφαρμογή των κανόνων της ΕΕ ([1]). Η επιβολή της νομοθεσίας από τα κράτη μέλη έχει βελτιωθεί κατόπιν διευθέτησης καταγγελιών από την Επιτροπή.

3. Από τις 5 έως τις 13 Ιουνίου 2012, το Γραφείο Τροφίμων και Κτηνιατρικών Θεμάτων της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Υγείας και Καταναλωτών της Επιτροπής (ΓΤΚΘ) διενήργησε έλεγχο στη Βουλγαρία για την αξιολόγηση της εφαρμογής των ελέγχων για την καλή μεταχείριση των ζώων στα αγροκτήματα και κατά τη διάρκεια της μεταφοράς τους. Επισκέφθηκε το σημείο εξόδου προς τη Βουλγαρία που αναφέρεται στην ερώτηση. Το ΓΤΚΘ κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι επίσημοι έλεγχοι στο σημείο εξόδου προς την Τουρκία πραγματοποιούνται κατά κανόνα με ικανοποιητικό τρόπο. Τα συμπεράσματα και οι συστάσεις από τον εν λόγω έλεγχο διατίθενται στην ιστοσελίδα της Επιτροπής ([2]). Με βάση τα πορίσματα του εν λόγω ελέγχου, η Επιτροπή δεν συμφωνεί με την άποψη ότι οι βουλγαρικές αρχές συστηματικά αδυνατούν να επιβάλλουν την εφαρμογή του κανονισμού 1/2005 για τους ελέγχους στα σημεία εξόδου.

([1]) Το ζήτημα συζητήθηκε με τα αρμόδια πρόσωπα για τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1/2005 τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011 και τον Ιούνιο του 2012 σε ειδική συνεδρίαση των αρχών των οικείων κρατών μελών, εκπροσώπων οργανώσεων για την καλή μεταχείριση των ζώων και του βιομηχανικού κλάδου τον Μάρτιο του 2012 και στο πλαίσιο της μόνιμης επιτροπής για την τροφική αλυσίδα και την υγεία των ζώων στις 4 Δεκεμβρίου 2012. Τα πρακτικά της εν λόγω συνεδρίασης διατίθενται στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/summary19_en.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2080

4. Ο κανονισμός 1/2005 εφαρμόζεται από τις 5 Ιανουαρίου 2007. Όταν τα κράτη μέλη δεν τηρούν τις υποχρεώσεις τους, η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αναλαμβάνει δράση. Ως προς την πλημμελή επιβολή του κανονισμού 1/2005, η Επιτροπή έχει κινήσει διαδικασίες επί παραβάσει σε αρκετές περιπτώσεις, όταν το έκρινε σκόπιμο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003673/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Long-distance animal transport from the EU to Turkey

Hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle (destined for slaughter and breeding) are transported over long distances from EU Member States (MS) to Turkey each year. Reports from NGOs, supported by empirical evidence, have demonstrated that these long-distance journeys cause immense suffering to the animals. Extremely long transport time — regularly prolonged by enormous delays sometimes lasting entire days at or near the border between the EU and Turkey — are often a result of incorrect/incomplete accompanying documents issued by the competent authorities in the MS of departure.

The NGO Animals' Angels has repeatedly documented the fact that animals regularly suffer as a result of this long-distance transport from dehydration and malnutrition, severe respiratory disorders, heat stress and exhaustion. A significant number of animals that did not survive the long-distance transport have been documented. Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport has been in effect for five years now. However, in 2013 the relevant EC laws are still not being enforced by MS, and several incidents of irregular transport authorised in MS have been documented. The European Commission needs to step up its efforts to ensure the efficient enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and the effective protection of animals during transport.

This being the case, will the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How many live bovine and ovine animals were exported from MS (broken down by MS) to Turkey in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. How does the Commission intend to rectify the systematic and permanent failure of MS of departure to enforce Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 in the context of transport of animals to Turkey?

3. How does the Commission intend to rectify the systematic and permanent failure of the competent Bulgarian authorities to enforce Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 at the EU exit point Kapitan Andreevo on the EU border with Turkey?

4. In connection with questions 2 and 3, what does the Commission consider to be an appropriate time to grant the MS in which to finally enforce Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

1. See annexes.

2. In order to improve enforcement when animals are transported from the EU to Turkey, the Commission has reminded Member States of their responsibilities in ensuring proper application of the EU rules on numerous occasions ([1]). Enforcement action has been improved by Member States following the handling of complaints by the Commission.

3. From 5 to 13 June 2012, the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) carried out an audit in Bulgaria to evaluate implementation of controls for animal welfare on farms and during transport. They visited the exit point in Bulgaria referred to in the question. FVO concluded that official checks at the exit point to Turkey are carried out in a generally satisfactory manner. The findings and recommendations from this audit can be found on the Commission web-page ([2]). Based on the findings from this audit, the Commission does not agree there is a permanent and systematic failure of the Bulgarian authorities to enforce Regulation 1/2005 in relation to checks at exit points.

([1]) The issue was discussed with the contact points for Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 in December 2011 and June 2012; at a dedicated meeting with the authorities from the concerned Member States and representatives from animal welfare organisations and the industry in March 2012; and at the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 4 December 2012. Minutes from that meeting can be found on: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/animal_health/sum_04122012_en.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2952.

4. Regulation 1/2005 has been applied since 5 January 2007. When Member States do not fulfill their obligations, the Commission may take action. In relation to improper enforcement of Regulation 1/2005, the Commission has initiated infringement procedures in several cases, where it has considered this was necessary.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003674/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συνέπειες των μέτρων λιτότητας στην Κύπρο

Τα μέτρα λιτότητας που έχουν εγκριθεί από τον Ιούνιο του 2012 ως αποτέλεσμα της ένταξης της Κύπρου στον μηχανισμό στήριξης είναι επώδυνα για τους πολίτες, ιδίως όσους ανήκουν σε οικονομικά ασθενέστερες και πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες του πληθυσμού. Διακόσιες χιλιάδες Κύπριοι βρίσκονται κοντά στο όριο της φτώχειας, ενώ 120 χιλιάδες πολίτες διαβιούν σε νοικοκυριά κάτω από το όριο της φτώχειας — περίπου το ένα τρίτο του συνολικού πληθυσμού. Η ανεργία έχει αυξηθεί κάθετα, με την Κύπρο να έχει σημειώσει, σύμφωνα με τη Eurostat, τη δεύτερη ταχύτερη αύξηση της ανεργίας, η οποία τον Ιανουάριο του 2013 έφτασε στο 14,7% του ενεργού πληθυσμού και στο 25,4% μεταξύ των νέων κάτω των 25 ετών.

Δεδομένου ότι μόνα τα μέτρα λιτότητας οδηγούν σε μεγάλη πτώση της ζήτησης και σε περαιτέρω ύφεση και απολύσεις, αποτελώντας επιπροσθέτως έντονα αντιαναπτυξιακά μέτρα που πλήττουν σοβαρά την κοινωνική συνοχή, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι προτίθεται να πράξει για να αποτρέψει όλα αυτά τα σοβαρά κοινωνικά προβλήματα που ανακύπτουν στην Κύπρο;

Έχει κάποιες συγκεκριμένες ιδέες, προγράμματα και χρηματοδότηση για την ανάπτυξη και την οικονομική μεγέθυνση, για την άμεση δημιουργία ευκαιριών απασχόλησης και για την αντιμετώπιση των αναδυόμενων αναγκών των ανθρώπων που διατρέχουν τον κίνδυνο της φτώχειας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει πλήρη επίγνωση των προβλημάτων που δημιουργεί η τρέχουσα οικονομική και χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση σε ό, τι αφορά τη φτώχεια και την κοινωνική συνοχή.

Το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία αποβλέπει στην αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης της χρηματοπιστωτικής αγοράς και τη σταθεροποίηση υγιών μακροοικονομικών ισορροπιών, ούτως ώστε να μπορέσει η οικονομία να επανέλθει σε φάση βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης. Παράλληλα με την αντιμετώπιση των δημοσιονομικών, τραπεζικών και διαρθρωτικών ανισορροπιών, το πρόγραμμα έδωσε έμφαση στον ζωτικής σημασίας ρόλο του συστήματος κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, που λειτουργεί ως δίχτυ ασφαλείας, και αύξησε την αποτελεσματικότητά του μέσω του εξορθολογισμού, της βελτίωσης της διοικητικής ικανότητας και της καλύτερης στόχευσης των παροχών.

Η Επιτροπή θα κάνει ό, τι είναι δυνατόν για να βοηθήσει την Κύπρο στις προσπάθειές της να αναπτύξει ένα πιο διαφοροποιημένο και βιώσιμο οικονομικό μοντέλο, να αμβλύνει τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες από την οικονομική κρίση και να μετριάσει τις επιπτώσεις στα πλέον ευάλωτα άτομα, μεταξύ άλλων με τη σύσταση της ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο.

Η ομάδα στήριξης θα βοηθήσει τις κυπριακές αρχές να έχουν ταχεία πρόσβαση στις σχετικές διαθέσιμες πηγές χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο των προγραμμάτων συνοχής/διαρθρωτικής πολιτικής. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος στήριξης, η Κύπρος θα έχει τη δυνατότητα να ζητεί υψηλότερα ποσοστά προχρηματοδότησης για μελλοντικές αιτήσεις χρηματοδότησης από διάφορα Ταμεία και «συμπληρωματικό» ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης 10% για την πολιτική συνοχής και την αγροτική ανάπτυξη. Τα προγράμματα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ θα συμβάλουν στην αναβάθμιση των δεξιοτήτων και τον επαγγελματικό αναπροσανατολισμό ώστε να διευκολυνθούν οι μετακινήσεις στην αγορά εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003674/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the austerity measures in Cyprus

The austerity measures adopted since June 2012 as a result of Cyprus's accession to the support mechanism are being strongly felt by citizens, especially those belonging to economically weaker and more vulnerable groups of the population. Two hundred thousand Cypriots are close to the poverty line, while 120 thousand citizens live in households below the poverty line — almost one third of the population in total. Unemployment has been rising steeply, Cyprus having, according to Eurostat, recorded the second-speediest rise in unemployment, which in January 2013 reached 14.7% of the active population and 25.4% among young people under 25.

Since austerity measures alone lead to a sharp drop in demand and to further recession and layoffs, constituting in addition strong anti-growth measures which severely affect social cohesion, we would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

What does it intend to do to prevent all these severe social problems emerging in Cyprus?

Does it have any special ideas, programmes and financing for development and growth, for the immediate creation of job opportunities and for combating the emerging needs of people running the risk of poverty?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the challenges posed by the current economic and financial crisis in terms of poverty and social cohesion.

The economic adjustment programme for the Republic of Cyprus is aimed at restoring financial market confidence and restabilising sound macroeconomic balances so as to enable the economy to return to sustainable growth. While addressing fiscal, banking and structural imbalances, the programme, put emphasis on the crucial role of the welfare system as safety net, promoting its efficiency via streamlining, improved administrative capacity and better targeting of benefits.

The Commission will do everything possible to assist Cyprus in its efforts to develop a more diversified and sustainable economic model, alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock and mitigate the impact on the most vulnerable people, including with the establishment of the Support Group of Cyprus.

The Support Group will help the Cypriot authorities to rapidly access the relevant sources of funding available under the cohesion/structural policy programmes. Under the assistance programme, Cyprus will be able to request higher pre-financing rates for future applications to various Fund allocations and a 10% 'top-up' co-financing rate for cohesion policy and rural development. EU co-funded programmes will help provide skill upgrades and re-training to ease labour market transitions.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003675/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: «Resgate» da República de Chipre — Imposto sobre os depósitos bancários

Considerando:

— o acordo dos Ministros das Finanças da zona euro relativamente ao empréstimo de 10 mil milhões de euros à República de Chipre, com vista ao refinanciamento da dívida pública;

— que o imposto sobre os depósitos exigido à República de Chipre como uma das contrapartidas do plano de resgate abala fortemente a confiança no sistema bancário;

— que a economia cipriota está fortemente exposta à economia grega e à economia russa, sendo que os bancos e empresas russos a operar na República de Chipre se arriscam a perder 40 mil milhões de euros, caso a medida do imposto sobre os depósitos bancários avance efetivamente;

— que, segundo a *Agence France-Presse*, o acordo alcançado pelo Governo da República de Chipre visa taxar os depósitos superiores a 100 mil euros em 30 % e que, além desta medida, o país irá instituir um sistema imediato de controlo de capitais;

— que o imposto sobre os depósitos bancários irá, como consequência, afetar negativamente o apoio dos *ratings* dos bancos em toda a Europa.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Existe a possibilidade da implementação de um imposto sobre os depósitos bancários nos países já intervencionados? Se sim, tal não poderá despoletar uma corrida aos depósitos com graves repercussões nos sistemas bancários?

2. O imposto sobre os depósitos bancários não afetará negativamente a captação de investimento direto estrangeiro na República de Chipre? Se sim, como entende a Comissão combater tais efeitos negativos na captação de investimento?

3. De que forma irá assegurar o Governo do Reino Unido os depósitos dos seus cidadãos expatriados na República de Chipre? Será tal possível à luz da lei cipriota?

4. Irá a decisão tomada em relação ao imposto sobre os depósitos «contra as leis escritas enão escritas», como afirmado pelo Presidente da Câmara dos Representantes?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(30 de maio de 2013)

As autoridades cipriotas não impuseram qualquer imposto aos depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros. Quanto aos depósitos não segurados (superiores a 100 000 euros), o Banco de Chipre deverá ser recapitalizado através da conversão parcial destes depósitos em ações e com a plena contribuição de acionistas e detentores de obrigações. Este elemento faz parte do acordo de 25 de março de 2013 entre Chipre e o Eurogrupo ([1]).

O caso de Chipre não constitui um modelo sobre a forma de dar resposta a crises futuras, mas salientou a urgência de adotar a proposta da Comissão sobre recuperação e resolução dos bancos, apresentada pela Comissão em junho de 2012. Depois da entrada em vigor da diretiva, os Estados-Membros terão um regime de resolução comum e disporão dos instrumentos necessários para intervir no caso de incumprimento de um banco. Na pendência da adoção da legislação da UE neste domínio, os Estados-Membros dispõem de uma ampla margem de apreciação no que se refere às modalidades de resolução de crises dos bancos, desde que respeitem as regras do Tratado e o direito derivado da UE em vigor. O tratamento de depósitos acima de 100 000 euros no âmbito do futuro enquadramento de resolução continua sujeito a negociações.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/homepage/highlights/eurogroup-reaches-an-agreement-with-cyprus?lang=en

De acordo com a Diretiva SGD ([2]), a proteção dos depósitos não depende da nacionalidade dos depositantes. No caso de Chipre, isto significa que os depósitos nos bancos cipriotas tanto por depositantes nacionais como estrangeiros são cobertos pelo SGD cipriota (até ao nível de cobertura de 100 000 euros). Isto inclui os bancos cipriotas que são filiais de bancos estrangeiros.

Os depósitos em sucursais de bancos estrangeiros que operem num Estado-Membro de acolhimento estão protegidos pelo SGD de um Estado-Membro de origem ou do banco estrangeiro. No caso de sucursais de países terceiros, os Estados-Membros devem verificar que as mesmas têm cobertura equivalente à estabelecida na Diretiva SGD. Se tal não acontecer, os Estados-Membros podem exigir que essas sucursais adiram ao SGD nos seus territórios.

([2]) JO L 68 de 13.3.2009, pp. 3-7. Diretiva 2009/14/CE relativa aos sistemas de garantia de depósitos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003675/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Cyprus 'bailout' — bank deposit levy

The euro area's finance ministers have agreed an EUR 10 billion loan to Cyprus to refinance its public debt.

The deposit levy required of Cyprus as a condition of the bailout plan has seriously shaken confidence in the banking system.

The Cypriot economy is heavily exposed to the Greek and Russian economies, with the Russian banks and companies operating in Cyprus risking losses of EUR 40 billion if the bank deposit levy actually goes ahead.

According to Agence France-Presse, the agreement reached by the Cypriot Government aims to impose a levy of 30% on all deposits over EUR 100 000 and, in addition, the country will immediately impose capital controls.

The bank deposit levy will, as a result, negatively affect the ratings of banks throughout Europe.

1. Is a levy on bank deposits possible in countries with a bailout plan already in force? If so, could that not spark a bank run, with serious repercussions for those countries' banking systems?

2. Will the bank deposit levy not have a negative impact on attracting foreign direct investment to Cyprus? If so, how does the Commission plan to combat this negative impact on attracting investment?

3. How will the UK Government guarantee the deposits of UK expatriates living in Cyprus? Will that be possible under Cypriot law?

4. Will the decision to impose a levy on deposits go 'against every written and unwritten law', as the President of the House of Representatives put it?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities have not imposed any levy on deposits under EUR 100 000. As to uninsured deposits (above EUR 100 000), Bank of Cyprus will be recapitalised through a partial conversion of such deposits to equity and with the full contribution of equity shareholders and bondholders. This is part of the agreement of 25 March 2013 between Cyprus and the Eurogroup ([1]).

The Cyprus case is not a template for how to deal with future crises but it has highlighted the urgency of adopting the Commission's proposal on Bank Resolution and Recovery, presented by the Commission in June 2012. Once the directive is in place, Member States will have a common resolution regime and the necessary tools to intervene if a bank were to fail.. Pending the adoption of EU legislation in this field, Member States enjoy a wide margin of appreciation as to the modalities of bank resolution as long as they respect Treaty rules and existing EU secondary legislation. The treatment of deposits above EUR 100 000 within the future resolution framework is still subject to negotiations.

According to the DGS Directive ([2]), deposit protection does not depend on the nationality of depositors. In the case of Cyprus, it means that deposits held in Cypriot banks by both domestic and foreign depositors are covered by the Cypriot DGS (up to the coverage level of EUR 100 000). This includes Cypriot banks which are subsidiaries of foreign banks.

Deposits in branches of foreign banks operating in a host Member State are protected by the DGS of a home Member State or the foreign bank. In case of third-country branches, Member States shall check that such branches have cover equivalent to that prescribed in the DGS Directive. Failing that, Member States may require such branches to join the DGS in their territories.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/homepage/highlights/eurogroup-reaches-an-agreement-with-cyprus?lang=en
([2]) OJ L 68, 13.3.2009 p. 3-7. Directive 2009/14/EC on deposit-guarantee schemes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003676/13
ao Conselho
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE) e Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Exceções e mecanismos de correção — Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020

O Conselho Europeu de 7 e 8 de fevereiro de 2013 chegou a um acordo relativamente ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020. Embora não se possa considerar esse acordo definitivo, dado ser necessário o parecer favorável do Parlamento Europeu, o Conselho deliberou em relação ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020, nomeadamente quanto à sua estrutura, montantes de cada rubrica, critérios para distribuição das verbas da política de coesão e da política agrícola comum e métodos de correção.

Pergunta-se:

1. Qual é o montante do mecanismo de correção para o Reino Unido para o período 2014-2020?

2. Que outros mecanismos de correção se mantêm, quais os Estados-Membros que deles beneficiam e qual o respetivo montante para o período 2014-2020?

3. Quais são os novos mecanismos de correção, de exceção ou de redução de taxas, nomeadamente no IVA, quais os Estados-Membros que deles beneficiam e qual o respetivo montante para o período 2014-2020?

Resposta
(31 de maio de 2013)

Nas suas conclusões, o Conselho Europeu de 7 e 8 de fevereiro definiu, entre outras coisas, o sistema de recursos próprios no contexto do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual para o período de 2014-2020, que se pauta pelos objetivos gerais de simplicidade, transparência e equidade.

O Conselho Europeu concluiu que continuará a aplicar-se o atual mecanismo de correção para o Reino Unido.

No que respeita aos recursos próprios baseados no IVA, o Conselho Europeu acordou em que, unicamente para o período de 2014-2020, a taxa de mobilização para a Alemanha, os Países Baixos e a Suécia será fixada em 0,15 %.

Além disso, o Conselho Europeu concluiu que o método de aplicação de uma taxa uniforme para determinar as contribuições dos Estados-Membros para os recursos próprios existentes com base no rendimento nacional bruto (RNB) permanecerá inalterado. Decidiu ainda que, unicamente para o período de 2014-2020, a Dinamarca, os Países Baixos e a Suécia beneficiarão, respetivamente, de reduções ilíquidas de 130 milhões de euros, 695 milhões de euros e 185 milhões de euros no que respeita à contribuição anual do seu RNB, e que a Áustria beneficiará de uma redução ilíquida da sua contribuição anual baseada no RNB de 30 milhões de euros em 2014, 20 milhões de euros em 2015 e 10 milhões de euros em 2016.

O Conselho Europeu não aprovou nas suas conclusões quaisquer outros mecanismos de correção ou de exceção.

O montante de correção para o Reino Unido, para o período de 2014-2020, dependerá, entre outras coisas, dos orçamentos anuais aprovados para esse período, da cobrança dos recursos próprios tradicionais, das bases harmonizadas do IVA e de outras receitas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003676/13
to the Council
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE) and Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Exemptions and rebates — multiannual financial framework 2014-2020

On 7 and 8 February 2013, the Council reached a decision on the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020. Although this agreement on the MFF 2014-2020 cannot be considered final because Parliament needs to give its assent, the Council discussed its structure, the amounts for each heading, how cohesion policy and common agricultural policy funds would be distributed, and rebates.

1. How much is the UK rebate for the period 2014-2020?

2. What other rebates remain in force, which Member States benefit from them and how much are they for the period 2014-2020?

3. What new rebates, exemptions and rate reductions — specifically in terms of VAT — are there, which Member States benefit from them and how much are they for the period 2014-2020?

Reply
(31 May 2013)

In its conclusions of 7-8 February 2013, the European Council agreed *inter alia* on the own resources arrangements relating to the multiannual financial framework for the period 2014-2020, guided by the overall objectives of simplicity, transparency and equity.

The European Council concluded that the existing correction mechanism for the United Kingdom would continue to apply.

As regards the existing own resources based on VAT, the European Council agreed that, for the period 2014-2020 only, the rate of call for Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden would be fixed at 0.15%.

Moreover, the European Council concluded that the method of applying a uniform rate for determining Member States' contributions to the existing own resources based on gross national income (GNI) would remain unchanged. It agreed that, for the period 2014-2020 only, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden would benefit from gross reductions in their annual GNI contribution of EUR 130 million, EUR 695 million and EUR 185 million respectively, and that Austria would benefit from a gross reduction in its annual GNI contribution of EUR 30 million in 2014, EUR 20 million in 2015 and EUR 10 million in 2016.

The European Council did not agree on any new types of rebate and exemption in its conclusions.

The amount of the correction for the United Kingdom for the period 2014-2020 will depend *inter alia* on the annual budgets adopted for that period, as well as on the traditional own resources collected, harmonised VAT assessment bases and other revenue.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003677/13
à Comissão
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE) e Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Montantes do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020

O Conselho Europeu, nos dias 7 e 8 de fevereiro de 2013, chegou a um acordo relativamente ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020. Embora esse acordo não se possa considerar como definitivo, dado ser necessário o parecer favorável do Parlamento Europeu, houve deliberações do Conselho, nomeadamente quanto à estrutura, montantes de cada rubrica, formas de distribuição das verbas da Política de Coesão e da Política Agrícola Comum e métodos de correção, relativamente ao Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020.

1. Pode a Comissão indicar qual o montante que cada Estado-Membro receberá relativamente à Política de Coesão para o período 2014-2020?

2. Pode a Comissão indicar qual o montante que cada Estado-Membro receberá relativamente à Política Agrícola Comum para o período 2014-2020?

Resposta dada por Janusz Lewandowski em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão remete os Senhores Deputados para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita P-001675/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003677/13
to the Commission
José Manuel Fernandes (PPE) and Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 amounts

On 7 and 8 February 2013, the Council reached a decision on the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020. Although this agreement on the MFF 2014-2020 cannot be considered final because Parliament needs to give its assent, the Council discussed its structure, the amounts for each heading, how cohesion policy and common agricultural policy funds would be distributed, and rebates.

1. Can the Commission state how much cohesion policy funding each Member State will receive for the period 2014-2020?

2. Can the Commission state how much common agricultural policy funding each Member State will receive for the period 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-001675/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html .

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003678/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Credibilidade dos testes de esforço na banca cipriota

Testes de esforço, sob os quais assenta toda a credibilidade do sistema bancário europeu, aprovaram há dezoito meses, sem reservas, os três principais bancos do Chipre. Valendo-se dos resultados desses testes, o presidente do Banco do Chipre, Andreas Eliades, disse que «os testes de esforço justificam as escolhas e ações estratégicas do Grupo e ilustram a sua fortíssima base de capital, mesmo sobre o efeito dos cenários mais extremos, difíceis e adversos».

Há cinco meses, encontraram uma situação mais preocupante, sendo necessários 1,8 mil milhões de euros para capitalizar o Banco do Chipre e o Banco Popular do Chipre. Agora, no âmbito do programa de resgate aprovado pelo Eurogrupo, são necessários 10 mil milhões de euros para capitalizar os dois principais bancos cipriotas. Surpreendentemente por isso, assistimos atualmente a um cataclismo do setor bancário cipriota, passível de grave efeito sistémico no âmbito do setor financeiro da Zona Euro.

Como justifica a Comissão tamanha disparidade entre a avaliação feita em sucessivos testes de esforço e a real situação do setor bancário cipriota?

Considera a Comissão justificável ou não que se ponha em causa a eficácia dos atuais procedimentos utilizados nesses testes de esforço e, consequentemente, a própria credibilidade do sistema de fiscalização das boas práticas do setor bancário a nível europeu?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

Os testes de esforço fazem parte dos instrumentos regulares do processo de supervisão e inspeção bancárias ao dispor das autoridades. São harmonizados pela Autoridade Bancária Europeia (ABE) e através da cooperação periódica em matéria de supervisão. Contudo, as autoridades nacionais de supervisão podem seguir pressupostos mais rigorosos na realização dos testes de esforço a nível nacional. Poderá haver uma maior harmonização, após a introdução do Mecanismo Único de Supervisão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003678/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Credibility of Cypriot bank stress tests

Some 18 months ago, the three main Cypriot banks passed, with flying colours, the stress tests on which the entire credibility of the EU banking sector rests. In his assessment of the test results, Bank of Cyprus CEO, Andreas Eliades, took the view that the stress test results justified the Group's strategic choices and actions, and illustrated its very strong capital base even under the most extreme, difficult and adverse scenarios.

Five months ago, the Bank of Cyprus and Cyprus Popular Bank entered troubled waters, requiring recapitalisation to the tune of EUR 1.8 billion. Now, under the bailout plan adopted by the Eurogroup, a further EUR 10 billion is needed to recapitalise the two main Cypriot banks. It is thus surprising that we are currently witnessing a meltdown in the Cypriot banking sector that could have serious systemic effects on the euro area's financial sector.

How can the Commission explain such a wide disparity between the assessment made after successive stress tests and the actual situation of the Cypriot banking sector?

Does the Commission think that the effectiveness of the procedures currently followed in stress tests and, therefore, the very credibility of the surveillance system for banking best practice at EU level should be called into question?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

Stress tests are part of banking supervisors' regular off-site inspection and supervision tools. They are harmonised by the European Banking Authority (EBA) and through regular supervisory cooperation. Nevertheless, national supervisors are free to apply more stringent assumptions in the conduct of domestic stress tests. Further harmonisation might be expected after the introduction of the Single Supervisory Mechanism.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003679/13
a la Comisión
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Prácticas comerciales desleales en Latinoamérica

El ejercicio grave y sistemático de prácticas comerciales desleales que se está produciendo en los últimos años en Latinoamérica es preocupante. La adopción de medidas proteccionistas o las expropiaciones a empresas de la UE por parte de algunos países latinoamericanos, efectuadas contrariamente al Derecho internacional o sin que se haya producido una indemnización justa, son contrarias al clima de entendimiento y cooperación que la Unión Europea quiere mantener con sus socios comerciales.

La UE debe rechazar estas prácticas comerciales desleales y adoptar cuantas medidas sean necesarias para defender los intereses de sus empresas. La UE debe exigir respeto de las normas a sus socios comerciales, especialmente a aquellos que reciben un trato comercial y ayuda al desarrollo preferencial.

¿Cree la Comisión que está justificado seguir otorgando un trato comercial y de ayuda al desarrollo preferencial a aquellos países que adoptan prácticas comerciales desleales graves y sistemáticas hacia la UE?

Ante la persistencia de prácticas comerciales desleales graves y sistemáticas ¿se replantearía el marco en el que se desarrolla la ayuda al desarrollo con los países incumplidores? ¿Considerará la suspensión temporal del SGP con los países que adopten prácticas comerciales desleales graves y sistemáticas atendiendo a las disposiciones del artículo 19, apartado 1, letra d), del Reglamento (UE) n° 978/2012?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión rechaza la adopción de medidas proteccionistas y se ha comprometido a garantizar que todos los socios comerciales de la UE respeten las normas internacionales acordadas a nivel multilateral y bilateral. La Comisión, en nombre de la UE, está adoptando todas las medidas posibles a fin de defender los intereses comerciales y de inversión de la UE en América Latina y en las demás regiones.

El Sistema de Preferencias Generalizadas de la UE (SPG) se inscribe en el marco de la cláusula de habilitación de la Organización Mundial del Comercio y debe aplicarse de forma generalizada y no discriminatoria. En caso de que los beneficiarios ejercieran prácticas comerciales desleales graves y sistemáticas con efectos negativos para la industria de la Unión, podrían suspenderse las preferencias que otorga el SPG. Aunque en este momento la puesta en marcha de procedimientos de suspensión no está justificada, la Comisión supervisará de cerca cómo evoluciona la situación. Es necesario recordar que, con la reforma del SPG, a partir del 1 de enero de 2014 las preferencias del SPG se diferirán para algunos países de América Latina (Argentina, Brasil, Cuba, Uruguay y Venezuela).

El objetivo principal de la cooperación al desarrollo de la UE es erradicar la pobreza. En este contexto, el Instrumento de Cooperación al Desarrollo (ICD) busca prestar apoyo a los colectivos pobres y marginados de los países de América Latina.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003679/13
to the Commission
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Unfair trading practices in Latin America

The serious and systematic use of unfair trading practices in Latin America in recent years is a cause for concern. The adoption of protectionist measures and expropriation of EU companies by some Latin American countries, contrary to international law or without fair compensation, run counter to the climate of understanding and cooperation that the European Union aims to maintain with its trade partners.

The EU must reject these unfair trading practices and take whatever measures prove necessary to defend the interests of its undertakings. The EU must demand that its trade partners respect the rules, particularly in the case of countries receiving preferential trade deals and development assistance.

Does the Commission believe that it is justified to continue granting preferential trade deals and development assistance to countries that adopt serious and systematic unfair trading practices vis-à-vis the EU?

Would the framework under which development assistance is provided for countries that fail to respect the rules be reviewed in the face of continuing serious and systematic unfair trading practices? Will the Commission consider temporarily suspending the GSP with countries which adopt serious and systematic unfair trading practices, in accordance with Article 19(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission rejects the use of protectionist measures and is committed to ensuring that all EU trade partners respect international rules, agreed at multilateral and bilateral level. The Commission, on behalf of the EU, is taking all the available steps to defend the trade and investment interests of the EU in Latin America, as in other regions.

The EU Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) falls under the umbrella of the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Enabling Clause, and must be applied in a generalised and non-discriminatory manner. In case of serious and systematic unfair trading practices by beneficiaries that have an adverse effect on the Union industry, GSP preferences may be withdrawn. While, at this stage, the activation of withdrawal procedures is not warranted, the Commission will closely monitor developments. It is recalled that under the reformed GSP scheme, as from 1 January 2014, GSP preferences will be deferred for some Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Uruguay and Venezuela).

The primary objective of EU development cooperation is the eradication of poverty. In this context, the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) is directed at providing support to poor and marginalised people of Latin American countries.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003680/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Prohibiting the sale of illegal Mercedes cars

The Commission published a Q&A regarding the implementation of the Mobile Air Conditioning Directive (2006/40/EC) on 18 March 2013. This made it very clear that it was not legal for new-model cars launched since January 2011 to make use of a mobile air conditioning coolant with a global warming potential in excess of 150, that from 1 January 2013 Member States should not permit such vehicles to be placed on the market, and that the Commission may commence infringement proceedings against any Member State that does not enforce this requirement.

The German manufacturer Daimler has declared publicly that it is not adhering to the requirements of the law, and that a coolant with a global warming potential far in excess of 150 is being used in its new-model cars. It is understood that these include Mercedes A-Class hatchbacks, B-Class family cars and SL roadster models. These vehicles are currently being advertised, sold and placed on the road by Mercedes dealers in my constituency and throughout the UK, and also in the majority of EU Member States. The Commission can verify this statement at the press of a button through an Internet enquiry.

Will the Commission confirm that on 20 March 2013 Commissioner Tajani said to Parliament's Environment Committee: 'If we get news of the infringement of the directive by any Member State I will start the necessary procedure'?

Will the Commission confirm that it has informed all Member States that they must not allow new models of cars containing coolants with a global warming potential in excess of 150 to be placed on the market?

Has the Commission been informed by any Member State other than Germany that it is not applying the legislation?

Will the Commission confirm that it now intends to commence infringement proceedings against any Member State that fails to enforce the legislation and prevent non-conforming vehicles from being placed on the road, or does it intend to continue to allow Daimler and the German Government to tarnish the reputation of other car manufacturers and select for themselves what EU legislation they will apply?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

As regards the enforcement of Directive 2006/40/EC, the Commission wrote to Member States in February 2013 requesting them to inform it: (i) if there were, on their markets, motor vehicles sold or registered, after 1 January 2013 which did not respect the directive and; (ii) if this was the case, which actions were planned to ensure conformity.

Some Member States replied to the Commission's request. Among these, reference was made to manufacturers whose vehicles were in the situation referred to in (i) above. The relevant authorities stated also in their correspondence that they were analysing, with the concerned manufacturers, the way forward to ensure compliance with the provisions of Directive 2006/40/EC.

According to the information currently available to the Commission, all other manufacturers are complying with the obligations of Directive 2006/40/EC.

Member States are responsible for the implementation of EC law within their legal systems. The Commission is responsible for ensuring that EC law is correctly applied. Where a Member State fails to comply with EC law, the Commission, as guardian of the Treaty, has the power to launch an action for non-compliance. In this context, the Commission informed the Parliament's Environment Committee that the national authorities were asked to rectify the non-conformity. Should this not happen, the Commission will consider launching the necessary infringment proceedings.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-003681/13
komissiolle (Varapuheenjohtajalle / Korkealle edustajalle)
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(28. maaliskuuta 2013)

Aihe: VP/HR – Kroatian asemyynti

Tiedotusvälineiden mukaan Kroatia on myynyt aseita presidentti Bashar al Assadin hallintoa vastaan taisteleville Syyrian kapinallisille. Mainittujen tietojen mukaisesti Saudi-Arabia on rahoittanut ”Kroatian kanssa tehdyn suuren jalkaväkiasekaupan ja toimittanut aseet Syyrian hallitusta vastaan taisteleville kapinallisille”. Samojen lähteiden mukaan ”Yhdysvaltojen ja muiden länsimaiden hallintoviranomaiset” ovat tietoisia asekaupoista. Lisäksi väitetään, että aseita on toimitettu ”ensisijaisesti kansallisina ja muina kuin uskonnollisina pidetyille aseistetuille ryhmille” ja että tarkoituksena näyttää olleen, että aseita ei myydä uskonsoturijärjestöille, joiden rooli Syyrian sisällissodassa on aiheuttanut huolta sekä länsimaissa että Lähi-idän maissa.

Mainitut asetoimitukset ovat selvästi ristiriidassa aseiden vientiä koskevissa EU:n käytännesäännöissä vahvistettujen perusteiden ja määräysten kanssa, joiden mukaan vientilupia ei myönnetä tapauksissa, joissa on mahdollista, että sotilasteknologiaa ja puolustustarvikkeita käytetään muuhun kuin sotilaalliseen tarkoitukseen ostajavaltiossa tai jälleenviedään kielletyillä ehdoilla.

Ovatko mainitut tiedot paikkansa pitäviä? Onko EU:lla luotettavia tietoja Kroatian harjoittamasta aseviennistä? Onko mainittua kysymystä käsitelty neuvoston asiaomaisen työryhmän kokouksessa?

Ovatko korkea edustaja / varapuheenjohtaja ja EU:n ulkosuhdehallinto olleet yhteydessä asevientiä valvovien Kroatian viranomaisten kanssa?

Missä määrin Kroatian asevienti on ristiriidassa Kroatiaa koskevien oikeudellisten velvoitteiden kanssa ottaen huomioon, että Kroatia on antanut julistuksen, jonka mukaan Kroatia kunnioittaa EU:n päätöstä, jolla kielletään aseiden myynti Syyriaan (neuvoston päätös 2011/273/YUTP, 9.5.2011, Syyriaan kohdistettavista rajoittavista toimenpiteistä)?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(26. kesäkuuta 2013)

Ulkoasiainedustaja ja komissio ovat tietoisia siitä, että eräiden tiedotusvälineiden mukaan Kroatia olisi lähettänyt aseita Syyriaan. EU:hun liittyvänä maana Kroatian tasavalta on täysin EU:n Syyrian vastaisten pakotteiden takana, ja sen aseiden vienti- ja tuontijärjestelmä on yhdenmukaistettu jäsenvaltioiden parhaiden käytänteiden ja aseiden vientiä koskevien EU:n käytännesääntöjen kanssa. Lisäksi Kroatia on nimenomaisesti ilmoittanut ulkoasiainedustajalle, ettei se ole myynyt eikä luovuttanut aseita Syyrian opposition joukoille, eikä ole muita tietoja, jotka viittaisivat siihen, että Kroatia olisi myynyt aseita Syyriaan tai muulla tavoin saattanut niitä Syyriassa käytettäviksi. Asiasta ei ole keskusteltu missään neuvoston työryhmässä.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003681/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Arms sales by Croatia

According to media reports, Croatia has been selling arms to the Syrian rebels fighting against the regime of President Bashar al Assad. Saudi Arabia is alleged to have financed 'a large purchase of infantry weapons from Croatia and quietly funnelled them to anti-government fighters in Syria'. The same reports cite 'American and Western officials familiar with the purchases'. It is further asserted that the distribution of weapons 'has been principally to armed groups viewed as nationalist and secular, and appears to have been intended to bypass the jihadist groups whose roles in the war have alarmed Western and regional powers'.

Such shipments clearly violate the EU's code of conduct on arms exports and its stipulation that export licenses should not be granted if there is a risk that the military technology or equipment might be diverted within the buyer country or re-exported under undesirable conditions.

Are these reports true? Does the EU have reliable information on Croatian arms exports? Has this issue been on the agenda of any relevant Council working groups?

Have the Vice-President/High Representative and the EEAS been in contact with their Croatian counterparts regarding these arms exports?

To what extent does Croatia's export of arms represent a violation of its legal obligations, bearing in mind that Croatia has declared its support for the EU decision prohibiting arms exports to Syria (Council Decision 2011/273/CFSP, of 9 May 2011, concerning restrictive measures against Syria)?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The HR/VP and the Commission are aware of certain media reports suggesting that Croatian arms were sent to Syria. The Republic of Croatia, as an acceding country, is fully aligned with EU sanctions against Syria, and its system of arms export and import has been harmonised with the best practices of Member States and the EU Code of Conduct on arms exports. In addition, Croatia has specifically informed the HR/VP that it neither sold nor donated arms to Syrian opposition forces and there is no additional information which indicates Croatia has sold or in any other way made available arms to Syria. The issue has not been discussed in any Council Working Group.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003682/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Investigación del régimen de contratación de profesores de idiomas en Italia

El Comisario de Empleo, Lázsló Andor, nos informó el pasado día 26 de marzo, en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-000936/2013 ([1]) referente al régimen laboral de los profesores de lenguas en Italia, que existen dos investigaciones en curso en este momento para tratar de dilucidar si la normativa que se aplica en Italia es compatible con las normas europeas. Una estudia la posible discriminación en que podría incurrirse atendiendo a la nacionalidad de los contratados. La segunda estudia el régimen de contratación temporal que se aplica.

Aunque en su respuesta el Comisario indica que la investigación se desarrolla en el marco de la iniciativa de control del cumplimiento de la legislación comunitaria denominada EU Pilot, a la vista de la inquietud que genera en el colectivo de profesores de lenguas en Italia la actual situación, quisiéramos saber:

1. ¿Qué departamento o servicios concretos de la Comisión son los encargados de la investigación?

2. ¿Cuándo creen que puede estar concluida esta investigación?

3. ¿Con qué método se están abordando las investigaciones sobre las dos cuestiones concretas objeto de estudio?

4. ¿Se han producido o es posible que se produzcan en los próximos tiempos audiencias con los profesores afectados?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de mayo de 2013)

La investigación está siendo realizada por la Dirección General de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión, en concreto las unidades responsables de libre circulación de los trabajadores y Derecho laboral.

1. Está a punto de concluir el análisis de las cuestiones.

2. Para tramitar las denuncias, la Comisión se pone en contacto con el Estado miembro de que se trata, a fin de comprobar si las normas y los Reglamentos son compatibles con el Derecho de la UE. Si la Comisión considera que se ha infringido el Derecho de la UE, puede incoar un procedimiento de infracción. Con excepción del caso particular de una práctica administrativa continuada que permita una actuación incorrecta, los procedimientos de infracción no están diseñados para hacer frente a una aplicación incorrecta de las normas por empleadores particulares (aun cuando estén el sector público). Son los Estados miembros los que han de velar por la correcta aplicación de la ley.

3. Los servicios de la Comisión están en contacto regular con algunos de los denunciantes, y ya se han celebrado varias reuniones.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-000936+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003682/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Enquiry into the rules for employing language teachers in Italy

The Commissioner for Employment, Lázsló Andor, informed us on 26 March 2013, in the answer to Written Question E-000936/2013 ([1]) on the rules for employing language teachers in Italy, that there are currently two ongoing enquiries, aimed at establishing whether the Italian legislation is compatible with European law. One enquiry focuses on possible discrimination on the grounds of the respective employees' nationalities. The other looks at applicable rules regarding fixed-term employment contracts.

Although the Commission indicated in its answer that the enquiries are being carried out within the framework of the initiative to control compliance with EU legislation (EU Pilot), given the concerns raised by language teachers in Italy in regard to the current situation, can the Commission state:

1. Which of the Commission's specific departments or services are in charge of the enquiries?

2. When does it believe these enquiries are due to be concluded?

3. How is it addressing the enquiries on the two specific issues being studied?

4. Have there been, or in the near future will there be, hearings arranged with the teachers concerned?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

1. The enquiries in question are being handled by the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Directorate-General and therein the units dealing with the Free Movement of Workers and Labour Law.

2. The analysis of the issues is about to be concluded.

3. In order to address the complaints, the Commission contacts the Member State in question to check if the rules and regulations are compatible with EC law. If the Commission finds that EC law has been breached it can initiate an infringement procedure. Apart from the special case of constant administrative practice condoning incorrect behavior, infringement proceedings are not designed to deal with incorrect application of the law by individual employers (even if they are in the public sector). It is for the Member States to ensure the correct implementation of the law.

4. The Commission services are in regular contact with some complainants; several meetings have already been held.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-000936+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES&language=ES.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003683/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(28. maaliskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Kroatian liittymisestä Euroopan unionille aiheutuvat taloudelliset riskit

Komission jäsen Füle totesi 26. maaliskuuta 2013, että Kroatia merkitsee menestystä laajentumiselle. Se on hänen mukaansa osoitus laajentumispolitiikan uskottavuudesta: kun ehdokasmaa täyttää kriteerit ja sitoumukset, EU huolehtii jäsenyyden toteutumisesta. Tämä on hyvä esimerkki myös alueen muille maille.

Tämä toteamus antaa melko erilaisen kuvan maasta, jolla ainoana Euroopassa ei ollut lainkaan talouskasvua. Komission tiedonannon (keskeiset havainnot) (SWD(2012)0338) ja kattavan seurantakertomuksen (COM(2012)0601) perusteella voidaan sanoa, että Kroatian talouden tila on vakava huolimatta kaikista uudistuksista, joita ehdokasmaa on toteuttanut ja edistyksestä, jota se on saavuttanut. Talouden hidastuminen on jatkunut ja työttömyys, julkinen vaje ja velka ovat kasvaneet; investointi-ilmapiiri on kärsinyt, julkisten menojen tehottomuus on keskeinen ongelma ja ulkomainen velkaantuneisuus merkitsee suurta haavoittuvuutta Kroatialle. Rakenteellisia uudistuksia tarvitaan kiireesti. Kahdessa edellä mainitussa asiakirjassa esitetyt luvut eivät tästä syystä kerro menestystarinasta, ja verrattuna muihin EU-maihin on suhteellisen suuri riski, että Kroatia tarvitsee EU:n rahoitustukipakettia.

1. Mitä tällä hetkellä tehdään sen varmistamiseksi, että Kroatia panee rakenneuudistuksensa täytäntöön ennen kuin niistä tulee rasite jo nyt epävakaalle EU:n taloudelle?

2. Onko komission mielestä onnistunutta toivottaa Kroatia tervetulleeksi, jos sille on välittömästi annettava makrotalouden epätasapainoa koskevan menettelyn mukainen varoitus (perusteellinen tarkastelu jne.)?

3. Millä todennäköisyydellä Kroatia tarvitsee EU:n rahoitustukiohjelmaa seuraavien kahden vuoden sisällä?

Štefan Fülen komission puolesta antama vastaus
(23. toukokuuta 2013)

Ennen maailmantalouden kriisiä Kroatian talous kasvoi nopeammin kuin EU-27:n talous. Tällä hetkellä maan talous on taantumassa, kuten on monien jäsenvaltioidenkin talous. Vuonna 2012 Kroatian BKT ([1]) supistui 2,0 prosenttia, ja sen odotetaan jatkavan supistumistaan vuonna 2013, tosin hitaammin (–0,4 %, komission talousennuste helmikuulta 2013).

Kroatian on pantava täytäntöön kipeästi kaivatut rakenneuudistukset kilpailukykynsä ja kasvunäkymiensä parantamiseksi. Joitakin tärkeitä ensivaiheen toimia on jo toteutettu, mutta lisätoimia tarvitaan, jotta talous saadaan uudelleen kasvuun ja maa voi hyödyntää EU-jäsenyytensä tarjoamat taloudelliset mahdollisuudet täysimääräisesti.

Kroatian epävirallinen osallistuminen talouspolitiikan EU-ohjausjaksoon vuonna 2013 on oiva tilaisuus edistyä rakenneuudistuksissa. Ohjausjakson puitteissa komissio arvioi Kroatian toimittamaa talousohjelmaa.

Joistakin julkisen talouden vakauttamistoimista huolimatta Kroatia on jo usean vuoden ajan ylittänyt julkisen talouden alijäämälle asetetun viitearvon, joka on 3 prosenttia suhteessa BKT:hen. Komissio ennustaa, että alijäämä pysyy 3 prosentin viitearvon yläpuolella vuosina 2013 ja 2014. Julkinen velka on edelleen alle 60 prosenttia suhteessa BKT:hen, mutta se on kasvanut tasaisesti.

Komissio aikoo liittymisen jälkeen analysoida julkisen talouden tilaa, ja se voi tarvittaessa suosittaa neuvostolle liiallisen alijäämän menettelyn aloittamista SEUT-sopimuksen 126 artiklan sekä vakaus- ja kasvusopimuksen nojalla.

Kroatian talous on jo nyt, rahoitussektori mukaan lukien, pitkälti yhdentynyt EU:hun. Maan liittymisvalmistelut, muun muassa sen komission kanssa viime vuosina käymä taloudellinen vuoropuhelu, ovat vahvistaneet sen talouden häiriönsietokykyä. Kroatian nykyisiin haasteisiin voidaan parhaita vastata sen EU-jäsenyyden puitteissa.

([1]) Bruttokansantuote.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003683/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: The economic risks of Croatia's accession to the European Union

Commissioner Füle stated on 26 March 2013 that 'Croatia […] is a success for enlargement. It is a proof of the credibility of the enlargement policy: when [a] candidate country delivers on the criteria and commitments, the EU delivers on the membership perspective. This is also a good example for the rest of the region […].'

This statement gives quite a different picture of a country that was the only economy in Europe not to experience any growth. On the basis of the Commission Communication (main findings)(SWD(2012)0338) and the Comprehensive Monitoring Report (COM(2012)0601), it can be said that Croatia's economy is in a serious state despite all the reforms and progress made by the accession country. Economic contraction has continued, and unemployment, public deficit and debt have increased; the investment climate is suffering, inefficiency in public spending is a key problem, and external indebtedness remains Croatia's main source of vulnerability. Structural reforms are urgently needed. The figures in the abovementioned two documents do not therefore give the impression of a success story, and the risk of Croatia needing an EU financial assistance package seems relatively high in comparison with other EU countries.

1. What is currently being done to ensure that Croatia implements its structural reforms before these become a burden for the already volatile EU economy?

2. Does the Commission perceive it as a success to welcome Croatia as a Member State and to immediately give it a warning under the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (in-depth review etc.)?

3. What is the probability that Croatia will need an EU financial assistance programme within the next two years?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Before the global economic crisis, the Croatian economy was growing faster than EU-27 economy. It is currently in recession, just as several Member States. In 2012, its GDP ([1]) contracted by 2.0% and is expected to contract further in 2013, albeit at a slower pace (-0.4%, Commission's Economic Forecast from February 2013).

Croatia needs to implement urgently needed structural reforms to improve competitiveness and growth prospects. Whilst some important initial steps have been taken, further efforts are required to return to growth and realise the full economic potential of its EU accession.

Croatia's informal participation in the 2013 European Semester provides a good opportunity to advance the structural reform agenda and pursue its vigorous implementation. Within this framework, the Commission will assess the Economic Programme submitted by Croatia.

In spite of some budgetary consolidation efforts, Croatia has exceeded the reference value of 3% of GDP for the general government deficit for a number of years. The Commission projects that the deficit will remain above 3% in 2013 and 2014. General government debt is still below 60% of GDP, but has been steadily increasing.

The Commission will analyse the budgetary situation after accession and could, if required, recommend to the Council the opening of an Excessive Deficit Procedure under Article 126 of the EU Treaty and the Stability and Growth Pact.

The Croatian economy, including the financial sector, is already highly integrated into the EU. The country's accession preparations, including its economic dialogue with the Commission over the past years, have strengthened the economy's resilience. Croatia's present challenges will be best addressed in the framework of EU membership.

([1]) Gross Domestic Product.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003685/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(28 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Negatywny wpływ wzrostu populacji kormoranów w Unii Europejskiej

Nagły wzrost populacji kormoranów stanowi poważne zagrożenie dla gospodarstw rybackich państw członkowskich. Problem rozmnażającej się ilości ptaków rybożernych dotyczy nie tylko rybołówstwa, ale także zagraża całej ichtiofaunie. W ostatnich latach liczebność kormoranów, przebywających w sąsiedztwie gospodarstw rybackich, stała się dla nich realną plagą.

Dla przykładu, na jeziorze Gaładuś, leżącym na pograniczu polsko-litewskim, w 1992 r. było 146 kormoranów, a w 2005 r. – 548. Obecnie jest ich około 540 sztuk. Według ekspertów, ilość spożytych ryb przez parę kormoranów wraz z ich młodymi szacunkowo wynosi 300 kg w ciągu 200 dni w regionach, gdzie te ptaki gromadzą się podczas reprodukcji.

Chciałbym zwrócić uwagę Komisji na wrażliwy temat inwazyjności i destrukcyjności nadmiernej ilości kormoranów dla gospodarstw rybackich na obszarze całej Unii Europejskiej. W chwili obecnej, aby zwiększyć efektywność podjętych działań, niezbędna jest skoordynowana, międzynarodowa strategia dla państw członkowskich wspierana przez Unię Europejską.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się do Komisji z pytaniem, czy może ona podjąć jakieś działania mające na celu stworzenie ogólnoeuropejskiej strategii zrównoważonego zarządzania liczebnością tego gatunku?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(6 maja 2013 r.)

Komisja podjęła szereg działań na rzecz znalezienia rozwiązania dla tej drażliwej kwestii, na podstawie dowodów i przy zaangażowaniu głównych grup zainteresowanych stron, w celu wsparcia państw członkowskich przy rozwiązywaniu problemów związanych z interakcją między kormoranami a rybołówstwem, w tym akwakulturą. Komisja przygotowała wytyczne mające na celu wyjaśnienie podstawowych pojęć związanych z ewentualnym zastosowaniem odstępstw na podstawie art. 9 dyrektywy ptasiej w celu zapobieżenia poważnym szkodom powodowanym przez kormorany w rybołówstwie lub w celu ochrony flory i fauny ([1]). Komisja wspiera również finansowo trzyletni projekt „Zrównoważone zarządzanie populacjami kormoranów" polegający na utworzeniu platformy do gromadzenia informacji oraz wymiany doświadczeń i praktyk ([2]). Projekt ten obejmuje przeprowadzenie operacji kompleksowego liczenia populacji kormoranów w sezonach lęgowym i zimowania. Projekty te najprawdopodobniej zakończą się latem 2014 r. i będą stanowić podstawę do dalszych dyskusji z państwami członkowskimi i zainteresowanymi stronami na temat oceny konieczności podjęcia dalszych działań, w tym, w razie potrzeby, opracowania ogólnoeuropejskiej strategii na rzecz zrównoważonego zarządzania liczbą kormoranów.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/pdf/guidance_cormorants.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/cormorants/home_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003685/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Negative effects of increasing cormorant populations in the European Union

The sudden increase in cormorant populations poses a serious threat to fish farms in the Member States. The multiplying numbers of these fish-eating birds represent a problem which affects not only the fishing industry, but also the entire ichthyofauna. Cormorant numbers in the vicinity of fish farms have reached veritable plague levels in recent years.

For example, the Galadusys lake on the Polish/Lithuanian border was home to 146 cormorants in 1992 and 548 in 2005, with the number currently standing at around 540. According to experts, a pair of cormorants and their young can eat an estimated 300 kg of fish over a period of 200 days in the regions where the birds gather during their breeding season.

I would like to alert the Commission to the sensitive issue of how invasive and destructive excessive numbers of cormorants can be for fish farms throughout the European Union. A coordinated international strategy for the Member States, supported by the European Union, is now needed to boost the effectiveness of the measures that have already been taken.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission whether there are any measures it could take with a view to putting in place a pan-European strategy for the sustainable management of cormorant numbers?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission has launched a number of actions to address this sensitive issue with an evidenced based approach involving major stakeholder groups, aimed at supporting Member States in addressing the interaction between Cormorants and fisheries, including aquaculture. The Commission has prepared a guidance document aimed at clarifying the key concepts relating to the potential use of derogations under Article 9 of the Birds Directive in order to prevent serious damage by Cormorants to fisheries or protecting flora and fauna ([1]). The Commission is also financially supporting a three-year project on 'Sustainable Management of Cormorant Populations' aimed at establishing a Platform for collection of scientific information, exchange of experiences and practice ([2]). This project includes the carrying out of comprehensive counts of Cormorant populations during breeding and wintering periods. These projects are likely to be finalised by summer 2014 and will form the basis for further discussions with Member States and stakeholders to assess the need for further action, including, if appropriate, a pan-European strategy for the sustainable management of cormorant numbers.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/pdf/guidance_cormorants.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/cormorants/home_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003686/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Proliferación de partidos xenófobos en la EU

Los partidos que fomentan el odio y el racismo en Europa están creciendo, dejando en entredicho el compromiso que la política europea tiene para evitar los terribles crímenes que fueron cometidos por los diferentes países que hoy conforman la Unión Europea. Dicha Unión nace como la primera alternativa histórica a la guerra como medio de relación entre los pueblos europeos.

Sin embargo existen partidos políticos de extrema derecha que fomentan el odio y el racismo que están obteniendo cada vez más representación, e incluso se han organizado a nivel europeo en una Alianza de Movimientos Nacionales Europeos que, según información aportada por la ONG «Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia», ha sido constituida para aspirar a su financiación a través de fondos públicos europeos.

Estos partidos fomentan ideologías que no respetan los derechos humanos ni el acervo del Derecho comunitario. Existen numerosas comunidades étnicas y culturales en Europa que se sienten amenazadas, con la razón que les da la Historia, por las posiciones cada vez más racistas y violentas de este tipo de partidos políticos.

El crecimiento de estas ideologías, que no había supuesto algo tan importante desde antes de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, debe dar la voz de alarma, puesto que estos países fomentan la homofobia, la islamofobia, incitan al odio al pueblo gitano, al pueblo judío, etc. Dichos posicionamientos deberían suponer acciones ilegales al no respetar a todos los ciudadanos europeos y, sin embargo, pueden resultar premiados con fondos públicos de la Unión Europea. Resulta necesario que la Comisión Europea tome iniciativas con respecto a este asunto e impida que reciban fondos, de manera que la financiación a los partidos políticos sea siempre condicionada al respeto de los derechos humanos y del Derecho comunitario.

¿Considera la Comisión que los partidos que conforman la citada Alianza de Movimientos Nacionales Europeos son elegibles para recibir financiación europea pese a no ajustarse a la correcta defensa de los derechos humanos y al acervo comunitario? ¿Considera la Comisión que el crecimiento de estos partidos supone una amenaza para los diferentes grupos étnicos que son objetivos de su odio racial? ¿Qué acciones está llevando a cabo para garantizar el respeto a estos grupos étnicos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión condena firmemente todas las formas y manifestaciones de racismo y xenofobia, independientemente de donde procedan, por ser incompatibles con los valores y principios en los que se fundamenta la Unión Europea.

La Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI ([1]) del Consejo obliga a todos los Estados miembros a tipificar como delito la incitación pública e intencionada a la violencia o al odio contra un grupo de personas o un miembro de dicho grupo definidos en relación con la raza, el color, la religión, la ascendencia o el origen étnico o nacional. Los Estados miembros deberán garantizar que también las personas jurídicas puedan ser tenidas por responsables de dichas conductas. La Comisión sigue de cerca la transposición y la aplicación de esta Decisión marco.

De conformidad con el Reglamento (CE) n° 2004/2003 ([2]), los partidos políticos a escala europea deben respetar, en particular en su programa y sus actividades, «los principios en los que se basa la Unión Europea: la libertad, la democracia, el respeto de los derechos humanos y de las libertades fundamentales, así como el Estado de Derecho». Esta es una de las cuatro condiciones que dichos partidos deben cumplir para solicitar financiación de la UE. El Reglamento establece un procedimiento específico para comprobar el cumplimiento constante de esta condición.

A primeros de febrero, y por primera vez, el Parlamento Europeo decidió poner en marcha el procedimiento de verificación con respecto a dos partidos que han recibido financiación para 2013, a saber, la Alianza de Movimientos Nacionales Europeos y la Alianza Europea por la Libertad.

([1]) Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo, de 28 de noviembre de 2008, relativa a la lucha contra determinadas formas y manifestaciones de racismo y xenofobia mediante el Derecho penal, DO L 328 de 6.12.2008, pp. 55-58.

([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 2004/2003 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 4 de noviembre de 2003, relativo al estatuto y la financiación de los partidos políticos a escala europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003686/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Rise of xenophobic parties in the EU

In Europe, a growing number of parties are promoting hatred and racism, calling into question the commitment European politics has made to avoid the terrible crimes committed by the different countries which now form the EU. This Union was created as the first historic alternative to war, and as a way of uniting European people.

However, extreme right-wing parties which promote hatred and racism are growing in popularity and have even organised, at European level, an Alliance of European National Movements, which, according to information from the NGO Movement Against Intolerance, was created to obtain financing from European public funds.

These parties generate ideologies which do not respect human rights or the *acquis* of Community law. Many ethnic and cultural communities in Europe feel threatened, given historical events, by the increasingly racist and violent stances taken by these kinds of political parties.

These ideologies are increasing in popularity at a rate which is unequalled since before the Second World War. This should be cause for alarm, given that these countries are promoting homophobia, Islamophobia and inciting hatred against the gypsy community, the Jewish community, etc. These stances should be considered illegal as they do not respect all European citizens and yet EU public funds could still be awarded to these parties. The Commission must take initiatives on this subject and stop these funds, so that the financing of political parties is always conditional on respect for human rights and Community law.

Does the Commission believe that the parties which make up the Alliance of European National Movements are eligible for European financing despite not complying appropriately with the defence of human rights and the Community *acquis*? Does the Commission believe that the growth of these parties constitutes a threat for the different ethnic groups which are the object of their racial hatred? What actions are being taken to guarantee respect for these ethnic groups?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Commission strongly condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, regardless of who they come from, as they are incompatible with the values and principles on which the European Union is founded.

Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA ([1]) obliges all Member States to make punishable the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred targeted against a group of people or a member of such ground defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent, or ethnic or national origin. Member States must ensure that also legal persons are liable for such conduct. The Commission is closely monitoring the transposition and implementation of this framework Decision.

According to Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 ([2]), political parties at European level must observe, in particular in their programme and in their activities, 'the principles on which the European Union is founded, namely the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom, and the rule of law'. This is one of the four conditions political parties at European level must satisfy in order to apply for EU funding. The regulation provides for a specific procedure to verify that that this condition continues to be met.

Early February and for the first time, the European Parliament decided to launch the verification procedure for two parties which have received funding for 2013, namely the European Alliance of National Movements and the European Alliance for Freedom.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55-58.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003688/13
à Comissão
Mário David (PPE)
(28 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Refugiados sírios na Jordânia

Os últimos dados indicam que, atualmente, a Jordânia acolhe mais de 430 mil refugiados sírios, na sua maioria mulheres e crianças. Estes refugiados lutam pelas suas vidas, fugindo para a hospitaleira e segura vizinha Jordânia. Mais de 250 mil refugiados estão instalados em comunidades urbanas, enquanto os restantes permanecem em campos administrados localmente pelo Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados (ACNUR).

Sabemos seguramente que a UE, no seu conjunto (Comissão, Conselho, Parlamento Europeu e Estados-Membros), tem vindo a desempenhar um papel preponderante no apoio aos refugiados sírios no seu próprio país e nos países de acolhimento, nomeadamente na Jordânia, no Líbano e na Turquia. Nós, europeus (e, como é óbvio, a comunidade internacional), estamos muito gratos pelos esforços que as respetivas autoridades estão a realizar.

Além disso, no contexto internacional, a UE tem mobilizado as agências das Nações Unidas e algumas ONG internacionais de ajuda humanitária a prestarem todo o apoio possível aos enormes fluxos de refugiados provenientes da Síria.

Por conseguinte:

1. Poderá a Comissão explicar, de forma lacónica e em termos práticos, o papel concreto desempenhado pela UE em termos de ajuda humanitária e financeira aos refugiados sírios através das agências da Nações Unidas e de ONG internacionais na Jordânia?

2. Que medidas bilaterais de apoio direto ao Governo e às autoridades da Jordânia, bem como às comunidades de acolhimento, tomaram as instituições da UE, nomeadamente a Comissão (excluindo os Estados-Membros), para, designadamente, contribuir para o financiamento de projetos prioritários nas províncias a norte, que albergam campos de refugiados sírios?

3. Considera a Comissão, na sua avaliação e tendo em conta a situação económica frágil da Jordânia e a instabilidade política na região, que a Jordânia será capaz de gerir sozinha o enorme impacto económico, social e político causado pela presença de centenas de milhares de refugiados sírios no seu território?

Resposta dada por Štefan Füle em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2013)

1. A UE acompanha a situação no terreno e recentemente aumentou a afetação de fundos para fins humanitários atribuída à Jordânia, de 43 milhões de EUR para 63 milhões de EUR, de forma a dar resposta às necessidades urgentes dos refugiados em termos de saúde, produtos alimentares e outros, bem como de abrigo, água, saneamento e proteção.

Além disso, a pedido do Governo da Jordânia, foi acionado em setembro o Centro de Informação e Vigilância da UE, o que resultou na doação de 1 000 conjuntos de cozinha, 1 000 estojos de higiene, instalações sanitárias, aquecedores, 50 000 cobertores e ambulâncias, provenientes de vários Estados-Membros e no valor total de 800 000 EUR.

2. Desde o início do afluxo de refugiados, a UE concedeu 20,8 milhões de EUR, a título de ajuda ao desenvolvimento à Unicef e à Unesco, destinados a apoiar as necessidades educativas, psicossociais e de desenvolvimento de competências dos refugiados sírios na Jordânia, designadamente no campo Za'atari. Recentemente, a Comissão anunciou uma contribuição adicional de 50 milhões de EUR para a Jordânia de modo a atenuar o impacto do afluxo de refugiados sírios. Serão mobilizados muito rapidamente 25 milhões de EUR da contribuição adicional anunciada, e outros 25 milhões de EUR nos próximos meses.

Além disso, a Comissão está presentemente a analisar todas as fontes potenciais de financiamento para apoio adicional aos refugiados sírios, do qual uma parte importante será atribuída à Jordânia.

3. A Comissão está totalmente consciente da situação difícil na qual a crise síria mergulhou a Jordânia e partilha inteiramente das preocupações do Senhor Deputado a este respeito, estando presentemente a examinar formas de prestar auxílio adicional rápido aos refugiados sírios e aos países vizinhos profundamente afetados pela crise.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003688/13
to the Commission
Mário David (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Syrian refugees in Jordan

The latest figures show that Jordan is currently hosting over 430 000 Syrian Refugees (SRs), the majority being women and children. These refugees ran for their lives to the hospitable and safe neighbouring Jordanian environment. Over 250 000 refugees are hosted in urban communities, and the remaining ones in UNHCR locally administered camps.

We know for sure that the EU as whole (Commission, Council, European Parliament and Member States) has played a leading role in supporting SRs in and outside Syria in host countries Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. And we Europeans (and also the international community, of course) are very grateful for the efforts that their authorities are making.

In addition, on the international scene the EU has mobilised the UN agencies and a number of international humanitarian NGOs to provide all possible support for the huge refugee flows coming from Syria.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission:

1. Can it explain, in brief practical terms, the exact role of the EU as a provider of humanitarian assistance and funding to the SRs through the UN agencies and international NGOs in Jordan?

2. What have the EU institutions, specifically the Commission (and excluding Member States), provided bilaterally as direct support to the government and authorities of Jordan, in particular to help finance the priority projects in the northern governorates, which are hosting SRs camps, and to the hosting communities?

3. In the Commission's assessment, and taking into consideration the fragile economic situation of the State of Jordan and the political instability in the region, does the Commission believe that Jordan would be able to deal single-handed with the gigantic economic, social and political impact of the presence of hundreds of thousands of SRs in its country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2013)

1. The EU monitors the situation on the ground and has recently raised its humanitarian allocation to Jordan from EUR 43 million to EUR 63 million to address the urgent needs of the refugees, in terms of health, food and non-food items, shelter, water and sanitation and protection.

In addition, further to an appeal by the Jordanian Government in September, the activation of the EU Monitoring and Information Centre resulted in the donation from several EU Member States of 1 000 kitchen sets, 1 000 hygiene kits, toilet units, heaters, 50 000 blankets and ambulances, for a total value of EUR 800 000.

2. The EU has provided EUR 20.8 million in development assistance to Unicef and Unesco to support the educational, psycho-social and skills development needs of Syrian refugees in Jordan, notably in Za'atari camp since the beginning of the influx of refugees. Recently, the Commission announced an additional EUR 50 million of assistance to Jordan to alleviate the impact of the Syrian refugee influx. EUR 25 million from the announced additional support will be mobilised very quickly, with a further EUR 25 million being made available in coming months.

In addition, the Commission is currently examining all potential sources of funding for additional support for Syrian refugees, for which an important part will be allocated to Jordan.

3. The Commission is well aware of the difficult situation in which the Syrian crisis has plunged Jordan and fully shares the Honourable Member's concerns in this respect and is currently examining ways, in coordination with other donors, of making rapid additional assistance available for the Syrian refugees and neighbouring countries heavily affected by the crisis.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003690/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση Eurogroup που αντιστρατεύεται τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα

Το Eurogroup, του οποίου ο ρόλος είναι συντονιστικός και δεν έχει οποιαδήποτε νομοθετική ή εκτελεστική αρμοδιότητα, αποφάσισε στις 15.3.2013 πως η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία θα πρέπει να προχωρήσει σε κούρεμα των καταθέσεων που βρίσκονται στην Κύπρο, ακόμη και για τα ποσά κάτω των 100 000.

Γνωρίζουμε όμως πως το Σύνταγμα της ΕΕ είναι οι συνθήκες της και κανένα όργανο δεν μπορεί να λειτουργεί εκτός του πλαισίου των Συνθηκών. Αναπόσπαστο μέρος της Συνθήκης της Λισαβόνας είναι και ο Χάρτης των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Σε σχέση με το δικαίωμα περιουσίας, το άρθρο 17 του Χάρτη αναφέρει ότι:

«1. Κάθε πρόσωπο δικαιούται να είναι κύριος των νομίμως κτηθέντων αγαθών του, να τα χρησιμοποιεί, να τα διαθέτει και να τα κληροδοτεί. Κανείς δεν μπορεί να στερείται την ιδιοκτησία του, παρά μόνον για λόγους δημόσιας ωφέλειας, στις περιπτώσεις και υπό τις προϋποθέσεις που προβλέπονται στο νόμο και έναντι δίκαιης και έγκαιρης αποζημίωσης για την απώλειά της. Η χρήση των αγαθών μπορεί να υπόκειται σε περιορισμούς από το νόμο, εφόσον αυτό είναι αναγκαίο προς το γενικό συμφέρον.»

Άλλη βασική ευρωπαϊκή αρχή δικαίου είναι αυτή της αναλογικότητας, δηλαδή η επέμβαση σε ένα δικαίωμα πρέπει να είναι ανάλογη με τον επιδιωκόμενο σκοπό και να μην καταργεί το περιουσιακό δικαίωμα.

Αυτών δεδομένων, δεν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή πως το Eurogroup έλαβε μια παράνομη απόφαση, η οποία καταστρατηγεί τις Συνθήκες της ΕΕ, τόσο διαδικαστικά όσο και ουσιαστικά, και αντιστρατεύεται τα θεμελιώδη ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα που προστατεύονται από τις Συνθήκες;

Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί προκειμένου να επαναφέρει τη νομιμότητα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στις 16 και 25 Μαρτίου 2013 η Ευρωομάδα κατέληξε σε συμφωνία με τις κυπριακές αρχές. Στις 2 Απριλίου 2013 επιτεύχθηκε συμφωνία τεχνικού επιπέδου για μια εκτενή δέσμη μέτρων που πρέπει να εφαρμοστούν κατά τη διάρκεια ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής: οι βασικοί στόχοι, τα μέτρα και τα αποτελέσματα καθορίζονται στο σχέδιο μνημονίου συμφωνίας μεταξύ της Επιτροπής, η οποία ενεργεί εξ ονόματος του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ), και της Δημοκρατίας της Κύπρου.

Η Ευρωομάδα δεν έχει λάβει ακόμη απόφαση για τα μέτρα που αφορούν τις τραπεζικές καταθέσεις. Τα μέτρα αυτά συνιστούν μονομερείς δεσμεύσεις των κυπριακών αρχών, οι οποίες αποτέλεσαν τη βάση για το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής και τη συνοδευτική χρηματοπιστωτική συνδρομή, που πρόκειται να παράσχει ο ΕΜΣ. Τα μέτρα που έχουν ληφθεί, προστατεύουν όλες τις καταθέσεις μέχρι 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 51 παράγραφος 1 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, οι διατάξεις του δεσμεύουν τα κράτη μέλη (ΚΜ) μόνο όταν αυτά εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της ΕΕ. Ως προς το προαναφερόμενο θέμα τα ΚΜ δεν ενήργησαν στο πλαίσιο της εφαρμογής του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει καμία ένδειξη ότι η Κύπρος μπορεί να έχει αγνοήσει κάποια από τις διεθνείς υποχρεώσεις της όσον αφορά την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων με τη θέσπιση των εν λόγω μέτρων.

Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί τα τεράστια προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζει ο κυπριακός λαός όσον αφορά την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και την αντιμετώπιση των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της τρέχουσας κατάστασης. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει απόλυτα τον κυπριακό λαό στην αντιμετώπιση των εν λόγω προβλημάτων και αποφάσισε να δημιουργήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας στις κυπριακές αρχές, με σκοπό επίσης την ταχεία κινητοποίηση όλων των μέσων που έχει στη διάθεσή της προκειμένου να συμβάλει στην αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας της κυπριακής οικονομίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003690/13
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision in breach of human rights

The Eurogroup, which essentially plays a coordinating role and does not have any legislative or executive powers, decided on 15 March 2013 that the Republic of Cyprus should apply a haircut to deposits in Cyprus, including deposits of less than EUR 100 000.

However, as we know, the Constitution of the EU is formed by its Treaties and its bodies cannot operate outside the framework of the Treaties. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights forms an integral part of the Treaty of Lisbon. On the right to property, Article 17 of the Charter states:

'1. Everyone has the right to own, use, dispose of and bequeath his or her lawfully acquired possessions. No one may be deprived of his or her possessions, except in the public interest and in the cases and under the conditions provided for by law, subject to fair compensation being paid in good time for their loss. The use of property may be regulated by law in so far as is necessary for the general interest.'

Another basic European principle of law is that of proportionality, which requires that interference in a right must be proportionate to the objective being pursued and must not annul the property right.

In light of the above, does the Commission not consider that Eurogroup has passed an illegal decision, which infringes the EU Treaties, both formally and materially, and the fundamental human rights protected by the Treaties?

What action does it intend to take in order to remedy this?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

On 16 and 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cypriot authorities. On 2 April 2013, an agreement at technical level was reached in respect of a comprehensive policy package to be implemented in a 3-year macroeconomic adjustment programme; the key objectives, measures and outcomes were laid down in a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission, acting on behalf of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), and the Republic of Cyprus.

The measures concerning bank depositors have not been decided by the Eurogroup. These measures constitute unilateral commitments of the Cypriot authorities that provided the basis for the macroeconomic adjustment programme and the accompanying financial assistance that is to be provided by the ESM. Measures taken protect all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

According to Art. 51 (1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States (MS) only when they are implementing EC law. In the matter referred to the MS did not act in the course of implementation of EC law. The Commission has no indication that Cyprus might have disregarded any of its international obligations regarding the protection of fundamental rights by adopting the measures at issue.

The Commission understands the enormous challenges facing the Cypriot people, in terms of re-establishing financial stability and responding to the social consequences of the current situation. The Commission stands fully behind the Cypriot people in rising to these challenges and is setting up a Support Group to provide technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities, also with the view to rapidly mobilise all the means at its disposal to help restore the viability of the Cypriot economy.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003691/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ακύρωση της Οδηγίας 2009/14/ΕΚ από το Eurogroup

Με βάση την ισχύουσα Οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων όσον αφορά το επίπεδο κάλυψης, κάθε κατάθεση έως 100 000 ευρώ ανά καταθέτη και ανά τράπεζα καλύπτεται από το κράτος στο ενδεχόμενο πτώχευσης κάποιας τράπεζας.

Η απόφαση που πάρθηκε στην τελευταία συνάντηση του Eurogroup (ημερ. 15.3.2013) για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο για ποσά κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ ουσιαστικά ακυρώνει αυτή την Οδηγία.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο αν θεωρεί ότι η απόφαση του Eurogroup συνάδει με τις αρχές και τις συνθήκες που διέπουν την ΕΕ.

Απάντηση
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο εφιστά την προσοχή του αξιότιμου κ. βουλευτή στη δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας της 19ης Μαρτίου 2013 για την Κύπρο, με την οποία ενημερώθηκε για την απόφαση που έλαβε το κυπριακό Κοινοβούλιο επί της πρότασης της κυβέρνησης σχετικά με την εφάπαξ εισφορά σταθερότητας.

Ακολούθως, στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα συμφώνησε με τις κυπριακές αρχές ως προς τα βασικά στοιχεία μελλοντικού προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής το οποίο υποστηρίχθηκε από όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ευρωζώνης καθώς και τα τρία θεσμικά όργανα της Ένωσης.

Επιπλέον, όπως αναφέρθηκε αρχικά στη δήλωση της 16ης Μαρτίου 2013 και επιβεβαιώθηκε στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα θεωρεί ότι, κατ' αρχήν, η οικονομική βοήθεια στην Κύπρο δικαιολογείται προκειμένου να διασφαλισθεί, μέσω της παροχής οικονομικής βοήθειας ύψους 10 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα τόσο στην Κύπρο όσο και στη ζώνη του ευρώ στο σύνολό της. Η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση σχετικά με τα σχέδια αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα που υπέβαλαν οι κυπριακές αρχές, κατά τα οριζόμενα στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013, και τα οποία θα αποτελέσουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα και τη διασφάλιση όλων των καταθέσεων κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Γενικότερα, το Συμβούλιο θα ήθελε να υπενθυμίσει στον αξιότιμο κ. βουλευτή ότι, σύμφωνα με τις Συνθήκες, τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται να μεταφέρουν στο εθνικό δίκαιο την οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 94/19/ΕΚ (περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων όσον αφορά το επίπεδο κάλυψης και την προθεσμία εκταμίευσης) και ότι, επίσης σύμφωνα με στις Συνθήκες, εναπόκειται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να εξασφαλίσει την παρακολούθηση της ορθής μεταφοράς και εφαρμογής της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003691/13
to the Council
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Annulment of Directive 2009/14/EC by Eurogroup

Under the current Directive 2009/14/EC on deposit-guarantee schemes as regards the coverage level, deposits of up to EUR 100 000 per depositor per bank are guaranteed by the State if the bank goes bankrupt.

The decision passed at the last Eurogroup meeting (on 15 March 2013) to apply a haircut to deposits in Cyprus of less than EUR 100 000 essentially annuls that directive.

Will the Council say: does it consider that the Eurogroup decision is in keeping with the principles and Treaties governing the EU?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the Eurogroup statement on Cyprus of 19 March 2013 in which it took note of the decision of the Cyprus parliament on the government's proposal for a one-off stability levy.

Subsequently, on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cyprus authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme supported by all euro area Member States as well as the three institutions.

Moreover, as initially indicated in its statement of 16 March 2013 and reconfirmed on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup considered that, in principle, financial assistance to Cyprus was warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount up to EUR 10 billion. It welcomed the plans presented by the Cyprus authorities for restructuring the financial sector, as specified in the annex to the statement of 25 March 2013, which will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector and safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

More generally, the Council wishes to remind the Honourable Member that, according to the Treaties, Member States are obliged to transpose Directive 2009/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Directive 94/19/EC (on deposit-guarantee schemes as regards the coverage level and the payout delay) into national law, and that it is, as set in the Treaties, up to the European Commission to verify whether Member States transpose and implement the Union's legislation correctly.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003692/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ακύρωση της Οδηγίας 2009/14/ΕΚ από το Eurogroup

Με βάση την ισχύουσα Οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων όσον αφορά το επίπεδο κάλυψης, κάθε κατάθεση έως 100 000 ευρώ ανά καταθέτη και ανά τράπεζα καλύπτεται από το κράτος στο ενδεχόμενο πτώχευσης κάποιας τράπεζας.

Η απόφαση που πάρθηκε στην τελευταία συνάντηση του Eurogroup (ημερ. 15.3.2013) για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο για ποσά κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ ουσιαστικά ακυρώνει αυτή την Οδηγία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν θεωρεί ότι η απόφαση του Eurogroup συνάδει με τις αρχές και τις συνθήκες που διέπουν την ΕΕ.

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουνίου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές δεν έχουν καθορίσει εισφορά για τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ.

Κανένας φόρος δεν έχει επιβληθεί για τις καταθέσεις στην Κύπρο. Οι καταθέσεις πάνω από 100 000 ευρώ σε δύο εμπορικές τράπεζες, δηλαδή την Κύπρος Popular Bank και την Τράπεζα Κύπρου, έχουν ανταλλαγεί με μετοχές στις ίδιες τράπεζες. Καταθέσεις σε άλλα πιστωτικά ιδρύματα, ανεξάρτητα από το ύψος τους, δεν θίγονται.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003692/13
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Annulment of Directive 2009/14/EC by Eurogroup

Under the current Directive 2009/14/EC on deposit-guarantee schemes as regards the coverage level, deposits of up to EUR 100 100 per depositor per bank are guaranteed by the State if the bank goes bankrupt.

The decision passed at the last Eurogroup meeting (on 15 March 2013) to apply a haircut to deposits in Cyprus of less than EUR 100 000 essentially annuls that directive.

Will the Commission say: does it consider that the Eurogroup decision is in keeping with the principles and Treaties governing the EU?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Cypriot authorities have not imposed any levy on deposits below EUR 100 000.

No tax is being imposed on deposits in Cyprus. Deposits above EUR 100 000 with two commercial banks, namely the Cyprus Popular Bank and Bank of Cyprus, have been swapped for shares in the same banks. Deposits with other credit institutions, whatever their amount, are not concerned.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003693/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Robert Mugabe's visit to Vatican City

Can the Vice-President/High Representative for Foreign Affairs explain why Italy was allowed to violate the EU's travel ban on Robert Mugabe, who transited through Italy in order to reach the Vatican City, where he attended the inauguration of Pope Francis?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

President Mugabe's transit via Italian territory to the Vatican could be considered as being consistent with the EU's travel ban restrictions. The provision in Article 4(3)(d) of Council Decision 2011/101/CFSP ([1]) states that: restrictions to entry: 'shall be without prejudice to the cases where a Member State is bound by an obligation under international law, namely: (…) (d) pursuant to the 1929 Treaty of Conciliation (Lateran Pact) concluded by the Holy See (Vatican City State) and Italy'. The Italian authorities who are responsible for the implementation of this Council Decision will need to fulfil their obligations under the 1929 Treaty of Conciliation in deciding whether President Mugabe may transit Italy to enter the Vatican state.

([1]) Council Decision 2011/101/CFSP of 15 February 2011 concerning restrictive measures against Zimbabwe, OJ L 42, 16.2.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003694/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Robert Mugabe's visit to Vatican City II

Can the Vice-President/High Representative for Foreign Affairs explain why the EU chose to ease sanctions against many Zimbabwean government officials on 25 March 2013, even though President Robert Mugabe violated an EU travel restriction only a week earlier?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The EU's decision in March 2013 to suspend restrictive measures applying to 81 individuals and 8 entities in Zimbabwe was taken in response to the agreement among the main political parties in Zimbabwe on a new constitution and the holding of a peaceful and credible referendum on the constitution on 16 March. The referendum and the adoption of a new constitution is a significant step in the implementation of the Global Political Agreement, which remains key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic Zimbabwe. In July 2012 the EU in FAC conclusions agreed to immediately suspend a majority of all remaining restrictive EU measures following a peaceful and credible constitutional referendum in Zimbabwe.

As regards President Mugabe's transit via Italian territory to the Vatican this could be considered as being consistent with the EU's travel ban restrictions. The provision in Article 4(3)(d) of Council Decision 2011/101 states that: restrictions to entry: 'shall be without prejudice to the cases where a Member State is bound by an obligation under international law, namely: (…) (d) pursuant to the 1929 Treaty of Conciliation (Lateran Pact) concluded by the Holy See (Vatican City State) and Italy'. The Italian authorities who are responsible of the implementation of this Council decision will need to fulfil their obligations under the 1929 Treaty of Conciliation in deciding whether President Mugabe may transit Italy to enter the Vatican state.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003695/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Zyprische Banken und Stresstests

Sowohl die „Laiki Bank" (Cyprus Popular Bank) als auch die „Bank of Cyprus" bestanden 2010 und 2011 die europaweiten Stresstests.

Dies war für sie ein deutlicher Indikator, mit ihrer Investitionspolitik fortzufahren — was dazu führte, dass sie bei griechischen Staatsanleihen Verluste in Höhe von 4,3 Mrd. EUR erlitten.

1. War sich die Kommission dieser Situation bewusst? Falls ja, inwieweit?

2. Weshalb konnten die beiden Banken trotz der geprüften Indikatoren die Stresstests bestehen? Inwieweit wurde zu dieser Zeit den Investitionen der Banken in griechische Staatsanleihen Rechnung getragen?

3. Welche Auswirkungen haben diese Ereignisse auf die europaweiten Stresstests? Ist das Vertrauen in die Stresstests noch gegeben?

4. Was war, unter Bezugnahme auf die Antwort der Kommission auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-000803/2011 vom 15. März 2011 die Grundlage für ihre Schlussfolgerung, wonach die haushaltspolitischen Aussichten sich sogar deutlich verbessert zu haben schienen?

Kann die Kommission bitte eine ausführliche Antwort geben?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Die Verluste der zyprischen Banken aus dem griechischen Schuldenschnitt (Private Sektor Involvement, PSI) sind Folge der politischen Entscheidung, einen solchen Schuldenschnitt vorzunehmen. Dass die zyprischen Banken vor dem PSI griechische Staatstitel hielten, war allgemein bekannt.

Bei den europaweiten Stresstests lag entweder der Schwerpunkt nicht auf den im Bestand gehaltenen öffentlichen Schuldtiteln (2010) oder wurde das Stressniveau auf einer niedrigeren Ebene angesetzt als der griechische PSI (2011). Kein Stresstests hätte der Einzigartigkeit und damit Unvorhersehbarkeit des griechischen PSI Rechnung tragen können.

Die europaweiten Stresstests werden von der Europäischen Bankenaufsichtsbehörde (EBA) koordiniert. Die Entscheidung über den Umfang, in dem die von den Banken gehaltenen öffentlichen Schuldtitel zu berücksichtigen sind, obliegt den nationalen Aufsichtsbehörden.

Die Bewertung der Kommission aus dem Jahr 2011 stützte sich auf alle damals verfügbaren Informationen; die zugrunde liegenden Analysen können (auf Englisch) unter folgender Internetadresse abgerufen werden: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/30_edps/other_documents/2011-01-27_cy_communication-swp_en.pdf

Seither hat sich der Abbau untragbarer wirtschaftlicher Ungleichgewichte jedoch fortgesetzt und wurde der Zugang zu den internationalen Kapitalmärkten versperrt. Auch die Auswirkungen des Explosionsunglücks auf Zyperns Stromerzeugungskapazität und der griechische PSI, der den zyprischen Banken große Verluste verursachte und den Eigenkapitalbedarf um über 20 % des BIP ansteigen ließ, führten zu einer unerwarteten Verschlechterung der Aussichten für die Entwicklung der öffentlichen Finanzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003695/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Cypriot banks and stress tests

Both Cyprus Popular Bank and Bank of Cyprus passed the Europe-wide stress tests in 2010 and 2011.

This provided a clear indicator for them to continue with their investment policies — which ended up incurring losses of EUR 4.3 billion on Greek Government bond holdings.

1. Was the Commission aware of this situation? If so, to what extent?

2. Despite the checked indicators, why were the two banks able to pass the stress tests? What consideration was given to the banks' investment in Greek Government bonds at that time?

3. What implications do these events have for the Europe-wide stress tests? Can the stress tests still be trusted?

4. In reference to the Commission's answer to Written Question E-000803/2011 of 15 March 2011, what was the basis for its conclusion that 'there seems to be a significant improvement in the fiscal outlook'?

Would the Commission please provide a detailed response?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Cypriot banks' losses from the Greek PSI are a result of the policy decision to conduct the PSI. Cypriot banks' holdings of Greek sovereign debt were built prior to the PSI and were public knowledge.

Europe-wide stress tests either did not stress sovereign debt holdings, as in 2010, or applied a level of stress which appeared to be milder than the Greek PSI, as in 2011. No stress test could have accounted for the uniqueness, and therefore unpredictability, of the Greek PSI.

Europe-wide stress tests are coordinated by the European Banking Authority (EBA). It is for national supervisors to agree to what extent they intend to stress the sovereign debt holdings of banks.

The Commission's assessment in 2011 was based on all available information at that time, with the underlying analysis available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/30_edps/other_documents/2011-01-27_cy_communication-swp_en.pdf

However, since then the unwinding of unsustainable economic imbalances continued and access to the international capital markets was blocked. Also, the explosion on Cyprus' main electricity generating capacity and the Greek PSI,which implied losses of the Cypriot banks that increased capital needs by more than 20% of GDP are major events that led to a worse-than-expected fiscal outlook.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003697/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(28 maart 2013)

Betreft: Tweede serie vervolgvragen Nederlandse leges voor verblijfsvergunningen

In haar antwoord van 21 maart 2013 op de vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000688/2013 over de Nederlandse leges voor verblijfsvergunningen verklaart de Commissie dat zij nog in dialoog is met de Nederlandse autoriteiten over de leges die zullen worden toegepast ter omzetting van de richtlijn inzake het recht op gezinshereniging en dat zij op 1 februari 2013 door de Nederlandse autoriteiten in kennis is gesteld van de mogelijke stijging van de leges voor langdurig ingezetenen.

De Nederlandse Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie heeft bij besluit van 25 januari 2013, gepubliceerd in de Nederlandse Staatscourant van 31 januari 2013, nr. 2529, de betreffende bepalingen van het Voorschrift Vreemdelingen zodanig gewijzigd dat vreemdelingen voortaan voor verblijfsvergunningen verleend ter toepassing van richtlijn 2003/86/EG een bedrag van 225 euro per gezinslid moeten betalen (zie de wijziging van art. 3.34, tweede lid, onder b) Voorschrift Vreemdelingen genoemd onder A van eerdergenoemd besluit van 25 januari 2013 alsmede de wijziging van art.3.34c, eerste lid, onder b) Voorschrift Vreemdelingen zie onder D van genoemd besluit).

Voor verblijfsvergunningen verleend op grond van richtlijn 2003/109/EG moet voortaan een bedrag van 150 euro worden betaald (zie de wijzing onder E van meergenoemd besluit alsmede het nieuwe art. 3.34, tweede lid, onder e) Voorschrift Vreemdelingen, zie onder A van datzelfde besluit).

Het besluit van 25 januari 2013 is op 1 februari 2013 in werking getreden, voor een deel van de bepalingen zelfs met terugwerkende kracht.

Kan de Commissie de in mijn vragen met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000688/2013 over de Nederlandse leges voor verblijfsvergunningen thans beantwoorden, nu de betreffende nieuwe legesbedragen al twee maanden geleden zijn vastgesteld en de betreffende bepalingen in de Nederlandse wetgeving al twee maanden in werking zijn?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(13 mei 2013)

In het arrest van het Hof van Justitie in zaak C-508/10 is erop gewezen dat lidstaten kosten mogen aanrekenen voor de afgifte van verblijfsvergunningen, maar dat hun beoordelingmarge daarvoor niet onbeperkt is. Er mogen namelijk geen regels worden toegepast die de verwezenlijking van de doelstellingen van de richtlijn in gevaar brengen. In het licht van dit arrest lijken leges van 150 euro voor verblijfsvergunningen op grond van Richtlijn 2003/109/EG niet onevenredig te zijn of die richtlijn haar nuttig effect te ontnemen.

Wat de observaties van het geachte Parlementslid met betrekking tot Richtlijn 2003/86/EG betreft, hierover is de Commissie nog steeds in dialoog met de Nederlandse autoriteiten. De feiten worden nog beoordeeld. Derhalve kan de Commissie op dit moment nog geen antwoord geven op dit onderdeel van de vraag.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003697/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Second series of follow-up questions on Dutch fees for residence permits

In its answer of 21 March 2013 to Written Question E-000688/2013 concerning the fees for Dutch residence permits, the Commission states that its dialogue with the Dutch authorities is ongoing concerning the fees which will be charged to transpose the Family Reunification Directive and that the Dutch authorities informed it on 1 February 2013 of the possible increase in the fees for long-term residents.

By a decision of 25 January 2013, published in the Netherlands Government Gazette No 2529 of 31 January, the Netherlands State Secretary for Security and Justice amended the relevant provisions of the Aliens Regulations in such a way that in future aliens will have to pay EUR 225 per family member for residence permits issued pursuant to Directive 2003/86/EC (see the amendment to Article 3(34), second paragraph (b) of the Aliens Regulations referred to at A in the aforementioned decision of 25 January 2013 and the amendment of Article 3(34)(c), first paragraph, (b) of the Aliens Regulations at D of that decision).

For residence permits issued pursuant to Directive 2003/109/EC, EUR 150 will in future have to be paid (see the amendment at E of the said decision and see A of that decision for the new Article 3(34), second paragraph, (e) of the Aliens Regulations).

The decision of 25 January 2013 entered into force on 1 February 2013, and in the case of certain provisions even did so retrospectively.

Can the Commission now answer my Written Question E-000688/2013 on Dutch fees for residence permits, bearing in mind that the new fees were adopted two months ago and the relevant provisions have already been operative in Dutch legislation for two months?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

In the light of the judgment of the European Court of Justice in Case C-508/10 pointing out that, while Member States may make the issuance of residence permits subject to the payment of charges, their margin of discretion is not unlimited, as rules cannot be applied which may jeopardise the achievement of Directive's objectives, a fee of EUR 150 for residence permits under Directive 2003/109/EC does not seem to be disproportionate or to deprive the directive of its effectiveness.

Regarding the Honourable Member's observations regarding Directive 2003/86/EC, the Commission is still in a dialogue with the Dutch authorities on this subject. The process of assessing the facts is still ongoing. The Commission is therefore not in the position to answer this aspect of the question at this stage.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003698/13
a la Comisión
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) y Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Delicada situación financiera de los farmacéuticos en Catalunya

Los farmacéuticos catalanes están padeciendo una situación de retrasos continuados y acumulados en los cobros de sus facturas por parte de las distintas administraciones públicas. La asfixia financiera a la que se ven sometidas estas microempresas, si no se corrige, puede derivar en la destrucción de empleo e incluso en un deterioro de la protección de la salud pública.

¿Dispone la Unión Europea de líneas de financiación para amortiguar esta asfixia financiera? ¿Dispone el Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) de alguna línea de crédito a tal efecto? Si este no es el caso, ¿podría la Comisión proponer al BEI su creación? ¿Tiene la Comisión la intención de hacer referencia al problema de asfixia financiera provocada por las administraciones públicas españolas en sus próximas recomendaciones específicas para España en el marco del semestre europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

1. En cuanto a su pregunta sobre si la Unión Europea dispone de financiación para aliviar la asfixia financiera que sufren los farmacéuticos en Catalunya, debe tenerse en cuenta que no se dispone de programas europeos específicos para dicha categoría profesional. Solo existen instrumentos financieros dirigidos a las PYME en general como, por ejemplo, el programa JEREMIE de la política regional europea, que ofrece a los Estados miembros, a través de sus autoridades de gestión nacionales o regionales, la oportunidad de utilizar una parte de sus Fondos Estructurales para financiar a las pequeñas y medianas empresas (PYME) en forma de capital, préstamos o garantías, mediante un fondo de cartera renovable que sirve como fondo de cobertura.

Las autoridades españolas aprobaron en 2012 un plan de gran calado de pagos a proveedores, con el fin de acelerar el pago de atrasos derivados de suministros, obras y contratos de servicios prestados a comunidades autónomas o municipios antes del 1 de enero de 2012, y ya se ha anunciado un nuevo plan para 2013.

2. y 3. El mandato principal del BEI es financiar proyectos de inversión sólidos y sostenibles que contribuyan a la consecución de los objetivos políticos de la UE, pero este organismo financiero no cuenta con programas de financiación que aborden la cuestión específica mencionada por Su Señoría.

4. La Comisión publicará sus recomendaciones a finales de mayo de 2013, pero en este momento no se puede dar a conocer su contenido. Conviene recordar que el programa de ayuda financiera a España prevé medidas para la recapitalización y reestructuración de bancos, así como medidas para desarrollar la intermediación financiera no bancaria. La segunda revisión de este programa, y otros documentos relacionados con el mismo, se encuentran publicados en el sitio web de la Comisión:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp130_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003698/13
to the Commission
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) and Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Financial difficulties of pharmacists in Catalonia

Pharmacists in Catalonia are continuing to experience mounting delays in the payment of bills by regional authorities. The financial suffocation imposed on these small businesses may, unless something is done about it, result in the destruction of jobs and even a decline in public health protection.

Given the above, I would like to ask the following:

Does the European Union have any funding available that can alleviate this financial suffocation? Does the European Investment Bank (EIB) have any funding for this purpose? If not, could the Commission propose that the EIB put some in place?

Does the Commission intend to refer to the problem of financial suffocation brought about by Spanish regional authorities in its next recommendations for Spain as part of the European Semester?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

1. Concerning the question of whether the European Union has funding available to alleviate the financial suffocation of pharmacists in Catalonia: there are no EU programmes specifically for this professional category. There are financial instruments addressed to SMEs in generally, of which JEREMIE is an example. Developed in the context of the EU's regional policy, JEREMIE offers EU Member States, through their national or regional Managing Authorities, the opportunity to use part of their EU Structural Funds to finance small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by means of equity, loans or guarantees, through a revolving Holding Fund acting as an umbrella fund.

The Spanish authorities adopted in 2012 a large scale suppliers' payment scheme, 'plan de pago a proveedores', aimed at speeding up the payment of arrears deriving from supplies, works and services contracts provided to regions and/or municipalities before 1 January 2012. A new plan has been announced for 2013.

2 and 3. The EIB's core remit is to finance sound and sustainable investment projects which contribute to furthering EU policy objectives, while it has no funding programmes addressing the specific issue mentioned by the Honourable Member.

4. The Commission will issue its recommendations at the end of May 2013. Their content cannot be anticipated at this stage. To recall, the financial assistance programme for Spain foresees measures for bank recapitalisation and restructuring and measures to develop non-bank financial intermediation. The second review of that programme and related documents are published on the Commission's website:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp130_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003699/13
an die Kommission
Constanze Angela Krehl (S&D)
(28. März 2013)

Betrifft: Mögliche Veruntreuung von Geldern aus dem EEF für Projekte auf den Seychellen

Über den Europäischen Entwicklungsfonds (EEF) finanzieren die EU und die Europäische Investitionsbank (EIB) ihre Entwicklungszusammenarbeit mit den AKP-Staaten. In den Jahren 2010 und 2011 wurden Projekte auf den Seychellen mit ca. 8,41 Mio. EUR gefördert. Diese Investitionen sollten für die Versorgung mit sauberem Wasser, neue Kanalisationsanlagen und nachhaltige Wassernutzung eingesetzt werden.

Nach meinen Informationen kam es auf den Seychellen in den Jahren 2010 und 2011 zu einem Missbrauch von EEF-Mitteln, die zur Verbesserung der Wasserversorgungsinfrastruktur eingesetzt werden sollten. Die Gelder sollen vermutlich vom Zuwendungsgeber bzw. den zuständigen Ministerien direkt zu regierungsnahen Personen geflossen sein. So wurden offenbar private Leistungen für Regierungsmitglieder erbracht, die mit Material und Arbeitskräften des EEF-finanzierten Projekts durchgeführt wurden.

Weiterhin wurden vermutlich Krankenhausaufenthalte von regierungsnahen Personen aus einem Teil der Gewinne beteiligter Firmen beglichen. Es liegt darüber hinaus der Verdacht vor, dass Materialkosten angegeben wurden, die eigentlich nicht erstattungsfähig sind. Fördergelder wurden daher anscheinend zweckentfremdet, sind nie oder nur zum Teil den geförderten Projektpartnern zugekommen und wurden demnach bereits vorher zum privaten Vorteil entzogen. Es scheint eine erhebliche Verflechtung von privaten und öffentlichen Interessen vorzuliegen. Daraufhin kam es mutmaßlich zu Problemen bei der Auszahlung von Löhnen in durch den EEF finanzierten Projekten. Auch der Rechtsweg und ein Urteil des „Employment Tribunal" konnte die Auszahlung nicht bewirken. Eine große Zahl von Gastarbeitern musste ohne Entgeltbezahlung in ihre Herkunftsländer zurückkehren.

1. Ist der Kommission das Problem bekannt? Wenn ja: Was hat die Kommission dagegen unternommen bzw. was wird sie unternehmen?

2. Hat die Kommission sich überzeugt, dass die Fördermittel entsprechend den Zuwendungsregeln verwendet werden? Wurden die Projekte ordnungsgemäß überwacht? Wenn ja: wie?

3. Welche Unregelmäßigkeiten sind der Kommission bekannt z. B. bei der Bezahlung von Projektbeschäftigten oder der fehlerhaften Mittelabrechnung? Welche Maßnahmen werden ergriffen, um die Auszahlung von ausstehenden Löhnen zu erwirken?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Sachlage, die der Frage der Frau Abgeordneten zugrunde liegt, geprüft. Nach den Informationen der für die Seychellen zuständigen EU-Delegation und nach Konsultation der EIB ([1]) und des OLAF ([2]) kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass keine illegalen Aktivitäten im Wasser- und Abwassersektor auf den Seychellen festgestellt wurden. Nach einer Ad-hoc-Überprüfung im Jahr 2009 wurde die vorgesehene Mittelzuweisung (5 Mio. EUR) vom Wasser- und Abwassersektor auf die allgemeine Budgethilfe übertragen, um die Durchführung des Wirtschaftsreformprogramms zu unterstützen. Weder wurden Projekte im Wasser- und Abwassersektor formuliert, noch hat es Transfers an öffentliche oder private Unternehmen für die Bereitstellung etwaiger privater Dienstleistungen in Krankenhäusern gegeben.

Die Unterstützung für den Wasser- und Abwassersektor wurde 2012 durch eine gemeinsame Finanzierung seitens der EU, der EIB und der AFD ([3]) sichergestellt, um den öffentlichen Versorgungsbetrieben bei der Bewältigung der Wasserknappheit und dem Ausbau der Wasserversorgung zu helfen. Der EU-Beitrag besteht aus einem EEF-Zuschuss in Höhe von 2,4 Mio. EUR für technische Hilfe und einem Zinszuschuss für ein Darlehen der EIB in Höhe von 5,4 Mio. EUR. Es sind keine Übertragungen im Rahmen des EEF an Empfängerbehörden auf den Seychellen vorgesehen, und die Maßnahmen werden nach den Vorschriften der einzelnen Geber überwacht und umgesetzt.

([1]) Europäische Investitionsbank.
([2]) Europäisches Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung.
([3]) Agence française de développement (Französische Agentur für Entwicklung).

Die Bereitstellung von Finanzmitteln für die Seychellen im Rahmen der allgemeinen Budgethilfe unterlag — als Kriterium für ihre Auszahlung — einer jährlichen Evaluierung, die in Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Gebern des IWF ([4]) durchgeführt wurde. Die Auszahlungen erfolgen direkt an die Zentralbank, und die in Landeswährung an die Zentralbank ausgezahlten und in den Staatshaushalt eingestellten Beträge werden einer Ausgabenkontrolle unterzogen. Bezüglich der Auszahlung von Löhnen in EEF-finanzierten Projekten wurden keine Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt.

([4]) Internationaler Währungsfonds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003699/13
to the Commission
Constanze Angela Krehl (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Possible misappropriation of funds from the European Development Fund for projects in the Seychelles

The EU and the European Investment Bank (EIB) finance their development cooperation with the ACP countries through the European Development Fund (EDF). In 2010 and 2011, projects in the Seychelles received funding of approximately EUR 8.14 million. These investments were supposed to be used for the provision of clean water, new sewerage systems and sustainable water consumption.

According to information in my possession, EDF funds that were supposed to be used to improve the water infrastructure were misappropriated in the Seychelles in 2010 and 2011. The funds are presumed to have been transferred directly by the awarding authority, or the relevant ministries, to people close to the government. In this way, private services were clearly carried out for members of the government using materials and labour assigned to the project funded by the EDF.

Furthermore, it would seem that hospital stays of people close to the government were paid for from part of the profits of the companies involved. In addition, there is a suspicion that material costs were declared that are not actually eligible. It would seem therefore that funds were misused, never or only partially reached the project partners and had already been used for personal advantage. Private and public interests seem to be considerably interrelated. Presumably there were problems when salaries were paid in projects financed by the EDF. Even legal action and a judgment from the Employment Tribunal was not able to bring about the payment and a large number of guest workers had to return to their countries of origin unpaid.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem? If so, what has the Commission done or what is it going to do about it?

2. Is the Commission convinced that the funds were used in accordance with the rules on grants? Were the projects properly monitored? If so, how?

3. Which irregularities are known to the Commission, e.g. for the payment of those working on the project or the accounting errors? What measures are being taken to bring about the payment of the outstanding salaries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2013)

The Commission has examined the facts underpinning the Honourable Member's question. According to the information provided by the EU Delegation to Mauritius and after consultation of the EIB ([1]) and OLAF ([2]), the Commission can confirm that no illegal activities have been detected in the Water and Sanitation Sector (WSS) in the Seychelles. In 2009 an ad-hoc review shifted the foreseen allocation (EUR 5.0 million) from the WSS to General Budget Support (GBS) to implement the Economic Reform Programme. Projects on the WSS have never been formulated, neither were transfers done to any public or private company for provision of alleged private services in hospitals.

Support to the WSS has been secured through a joint funding from the EU, EIB and AFD ([3]) in 2012 to help the Public Utilities Corporation to alleviate water shortages and expansion of water supply. The EU is contributing through an EDF grant of EUR 2.4 million for technical assistance and through an interest rate subsidy on an EIB loan of EUR 5.4 million. No transfers under the EDF are foreseen to any beneficiary authority in Seychelles and operations are monitored and implemented according to the rules of each donor.

([1]) European Investment Bank.
([2]) European Anti-Fraud Office.
([3]) Agence Française de développement.

Funding to Seychelles through GBS was subject to an annual assessment to evaluate eligibility for disbursement in collaboration with assessment reviews by other donors IMF ([4]). Payments are effected directly to the Central Bank and accounting verification is undertaken to the corresponding amount transferred in local currency to the Central Bank and in the National Budget. No irregularities concerning payments of salaries have been detected from EDF funded projects.

([4]) International Monetary Fund.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003700/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Plan to increase Dublin's fresh water supply towards 2050

Dublin City Council proposes to extract water from Lough Derg, County Clare, Ireland as part of a plan to increase Dublin's fresh water supply to meet the potential increase in population in the greater Dublin region towards 2050.

1. Is the Commission aware of the plan to extract 350 million gallons of water per day from Lough Derg, County Clare?

2. Does this planned measure contravene the Natura 2000 Directives on natural habitats and birds?

3. If so, what action does the Commission propose to take?

4. If so, can the Commission confirm that it will impose restrictions or intervene in any plans to extract water from Lough Derg?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission is aware that consideration is being given to extracting water from the Shannon at Lough Derg to provide a fresh water supply to the greater Dublin Region. Lough Derg is a protected Natura 2000 site under both the Birds ([1]) and Habitats ([2]) Directives. For any development that is likely to have a significant effect on the site, in view of its conservation objectives, the competent authorities in Ireland must ensure that an appropriate assessment is carried out in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Likewise, the authorities will need to have full regard to the requirements of Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive ([3]). The Commission understands that the relevant authorities in Ireland are fully aware of these legal obligations and therefore does not see any basis to intervene in relation to compliance with EU environmental legislation.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. OJ L 20 of 26.1.2010 p.7.
([2]) Council Directive 92/43//EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003701/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: EU jobs and growth funding

Despite the fact that the issues of youth unemployment, stability, jobs and growth in general have all been made a priority by the Irish presidency, Europe's unemployment levels are at record levels and are showing no sign of recovery.

— How will the upcoming MFF make employment and employability a priority?

— What European Union funding is or will be accessible in the short and long term for unemployment-reducing projects, including measures to increase skills and enhance employability?

— Will the European Union make funds available for the creation of bodies to deal with these issues if none currently exist?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

1. The ESF ([1]) is the main EU financial tool to tackle unemployment, including youth unemployment. The Commission's proposal for the MFF ([2]) 2014-2020 foresees a minimum overall share of 25% of the cohesion envelope for the ESF. The Commission stands firm on this aspect as a prerequisite for investment in measures to support human capital and counts on the Parliament's support.

2. The ESF has a key role to play to prevent and combat unemployment by enhancing people's skills and adaptability measures. The European Council has specifically acknowledged a key role for the ESF in tackling youth unemployment, by earmarking EUR 6 billion for this priority. The YEI ([3]), co-funded by the ESF, will be available in 2014-2020 to support the implementation of the Youth Employment Package and in particular of the Youth Guarantee, which aims to ensure that all NEETS ([4]) receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

3. For meeting skills and employability challenges in collaboration with social partners, the Progress programme will continue to support in 2013 skills initiatives, including the establishment of European Sector Skills Councils.

4. In order to strengthen the supply and the quality of apprenticeships, which are key factors in developing the skills and employability of young people, a European Alliance for Apprenticeships is being established with the support of the Commission.

5. Boosting skills and employability essentially comes from education and training. The Commission has proposed a substantial increase in the funding to education and training through the new Erasmus for All programme.

([1]) European Social Fund.
([2]) Multi-annual Financial Framework.
([3]) Youth Employment Initiative.
([4]) young people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003702/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Tobacco lobbying

Given the fact that the EU and its Member States have signed the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which gives very clear guidelines on the regulation of interactions between the tobacco industry and those who make and implement public health policies relating to tobacco control, stating that 'where interactions are necessary, Parties should ensure that such interactions are conducted transparently',

— can the Commission outline any new measures it will be taking to ensure full compliance with the WHO FCTC guidelines in all its departments, so that any contact with the tobacco industry is kept to a minimum and that, when it is deemed necessary to meet, all meetings are held transparently to ensure accountability to the public health policy process?

— does the Commission not believe that meetings with the tobacco industry should always be fully declared, should not require freedom of information requests to make them public, and that appropriate disciplinary procedures should be applied to those who do not comply?

— does the Commission have any plans to incorporate a specific reference to contact with the tobacco industry in either its Code of Conduct for Commissioners or the Staff Regulations?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the honourable Member to the answers already given on this topic in replies given to Written Question E-11643/12 and in particular Written Question E-1718/13 from the Honourable Member.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-003703/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28. marec 2013)

Zadeva: Pobuda za zaposlovanje mladih: regionalni vidiki

Številne evropske regije so v preteklih mesecih doživele izredno velik porast brezposelnosti mladih, ki je ob koncu leta 2012 že presegla 25 %. Kljub resnim razmeram na tem področju bi lahko bile te regije zaradi pogojev v predlogu Sveta za spremembe večletnega finančnega okvira za obdobje 2014–2020 dejansko izključene iz pobude za zaposlovanje mladih v naslednjih sedmih letih, ker so se njihove razmere resno poslabšale šele v zadnjem četrtletju leta 2012.

Če se pri določanju upravičenosti upošteva zgolj povprečna stopnja brezposelnosti v celem letu 2012, bi bilo financiranje za obdobje naslednjih sedem let zunaj dosega mnogih regij z največjim povečanjem stopnje brezposelnosti mladih. Glede na izredno nespodbudne trende v nekaterih regijah, tudi v zahodni Sloveniji, bi rada vedela, kakšno je stališče Komisije do neupoštevanja resnosti sprememb v nekaterih regijah.

Poleg tega bi rada vedela, če se Komisija strinja, da bi bilo treba pri predlaganih merilih za določanje upravičenosti točno navesti, da bi morala brezposelnost mladih vsaj enkrat v letu 2012 preseči prag 25 %, in se torej ne bi smeli sklicevati na letno povprečje.

Ali se Komisija strinja, da bi bilo pri določanju upravičenosti treba upoštevati vsaj posebne razmere v regijah z najvišjim porastom brezposelnosti mladih v letu 2012?

Odgovor komisarja Andorja v imenu Komisije
(29. maj 2013)

Predlogi Komisije ([1]) za spremembe njenih predlogov za Evropski socialni sklad in uredbo o skupnih določbah natančno upoštevajo sklepe Evropskega sveta z dne 7. in 8. februarja 2013, ki so vzpostavili okvir za pobudo za zaposlovanje mladih. V navedenih sklepih je jasno določena osnova za dodelitev posebne proračunske vrstice za pobudo za zaposlovanje mladih, ki se nanaša na stopnjo brezposelnosti mladih v regijah na ravni NUTS 2 v letu 2012.

Komisija želi poslanko opozoriti na dejstvo, da lahko poleg sredstev, namenjenih pobudi za zaposlovanje mladih, države članice namenijo sredstva iz Evropskega socialnega sklada, ki so jim dodeljena, za ukrepe proti brezposelnosti mladih v obdobju 2014–2020. Zlasti države članice z veliko in naraščajočo stopnjo brezposelnosti mladih bi pridobile z znatno dodelitvijo sredstev iz ESS najmanj na stopnji, ki izhaja iz predloga Komisije za minimalni delež ESS.

([1]) COM(2013) 145 final in 146 final z dne 12. marca 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003703/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Youth Employment Initiative: regional aspects

A number of European regions experienced a dramatic increase in youth unemployment in recent months and had, as a result, already exceeded the 25% threshold by the end of 2012. Despite the gravity of their youth unemployment situation, these regions could be effectively excluded from access to the Youth Employment Initiative during the next seven years under the terms introduced as part of the Council proposals for changes to the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, as their situation severely worsened only during the last quarter of 2012.

If only the average unemployment rate for the whole of 2012 is taken into account when determining eligibility, funding for the next seven-year period could be out of reach for many regions with the highest increase in youth unemployment rates. Considering the dramatic trends in certain regions, including Western Slovenia, I would like to know what the Commission's position is on ignoring the severity of changes in specific regions.

Furthermore, I would like to know if the Commission agrees that the proposed criteria for determining eligibility should specify that the youth unemployment rate would need to exceed the 25% threshold at least once during 2012 and should therefore not refer to the yearly average.

Does it also agree that at least the specific situation of regions with the highest growth in youth unemployment during 2012 should be taken into account when deciding on eligibility?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission's proposals ([1]) for amendments to its proposals for the European Social Fund and Common Provisions Regulations follow closely the conclusions of the 7 and 8 February 2013 European Council, which launched the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). Those conclusions clearly set out the basis for the allocation of the YEI's special budget line, which refers to 2012 youth unemployment rates in NUTS level 2 regions.

The Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that, in addition to the YEI resources, the Member States can earmark European Social Fund resources allocated to them for measures to combat youth unemployment in the 2014-2020 period. In particular Member States with high and increasing levels of youth unemployment would therefore benefit from a robust ESF allocation at least at the level resulting from the Commission proposal for an ESF minimum share.

([1]) COM(2013)145 final and 146 final of 12 March 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003704/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(28 mars 2013)

Objet: Fonds européens pour un projet potentiellement en violation du droit européen de l'environnement en France

Le bois de Tronçay est riche d'une dizaine de sources, d'un petit ruisseau affluent de l'Yvonne, d'une zone humide de plus de 6 hectares, et de plusieurs espèces protégées. Outre sa valeur écologique individuelle, le bois constitue également un corridor écologique entre deux sites Natura 2000, à savoir les étangs du Bazois, dont les richesses portent sur l'avifaune, les reptiles, les amphibiens et les chauves-souris, et la forêt du Morvan, abritant la colonie de Grand Murin la plus importante en Bourgogne.

Cette richesse écologique est en danger de destruction quasi totale du fait de la création d'une zone d'activité industrielle. Ce projet comprend deux grandes zones, la première destinée à une plateforme de sciage, une centrale de cogénération biomasse et une usine de fabrication de pellets qui seraient gérées par une première société (valeur de 155 millions d'euros), la deuxième destinée à l'aménagement d'un lotissement industriel par une seconde société (valeur de 10 millions d'euros).

Malgré plusieurs avis défavorables du Conseil national de protection de la nature (CNPN) sur l'ensemble des dossiers, le préfet de la Nièvre a délivré des permis de destruction et de défrichement aux entreprises concernées. À plusieurs reprises, ces permis ont été suspendus par le tribunal administratif, jugeant insuffisants les éléments du dossier relatifs à l'absence d'autre solution satisfaisante, à l'état de conservation des espèces concernées, et les raisons impératives d'intérêt public majeur qui justifieraient la destruction.

De plus, du fait des dimensions colossales de ces projets, ils ne peuvent être réalisés que sous condition d'obtenir une subvention importante et exceptionnelle de l'Europe. La demande pourrait, selon les dires de certains représentants locaux, porter sur 75 % du montant de l'investissement pour le lotissement industriel. Compte tenu du rôle fondamental du bois de Tronçay en ce qui concerne la biodiversité, le stockage de CO_2 et la gestion écologique des ressources en eau et en biomasse, il nous paraît improbable qu'un tel projet puisse être facilité par des subventions européennes notamment au regard de l'engagement de l'Union européenne à supprimer les subventions néfastes pour l'environnement.

Suite à des demandes de nombreuses parties prenantes et d'élus locaux sur les conséquences et le financement de ce projet, et au dépôt de deux pétitions au Parlement européen, la Commission peut-elle donc répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. A-t-elle connaissance des infractions potentielles à la directive-cadre sur l'eau (2000/60/CE) et à la directive Habitats (92/43/CEE), et si oui, comment entend-elle agir?

2. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que le projet est éligible à des fonds européens et, si oui, peut-elle annoncer si le projet a été retenu ou non?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

La Commission a connaissance de ce projet, objet de la pétition 1215/2013 soumise au Parlement européen. La Commission a demandé aux autorités françaises des informations préliminaires sur ce projet afin d'évaluer sa conformité avec la législation de l'UE en matière d'environnement.

La France a proposé que ce projet soit cofinancé par le Fonds européen de développement régional et soit considéré comme un grand projet, mais aucune demande officielle n'est encore parvenue à la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003704/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: EU funding for a project in France which may breach EU environmental legislation

The Tronçay forest contains a dozen springs, a small stream which runs into the Yonne and more than 6 acres of wetland and provides a habitat for several protected species. Besides its intrinsic environmental value, the forest also acts as a natural corridor between two Natura 2000 sites, namely the Bazois ponds, home to a rich variety of birds, reptiles, amphibians and bats, and the Morvan forest, which has the largest greater mouse-eared bat colony in Burgundy.

This ecological diversity now risks being almost completely destroyed by the creation of an area of industrial activity. This project covers two large sites: the first will house a sawmill, a biomass cogeneration plant and a pellet factory, to be operated by one firm (projected cost: EUR 155 million), and the second an industrial estate to be developed by a different firm (projected cost: EUR 10 million).

Despite a series of unfavourable opinions delivered by the National Nature Conservation Council (CNPN) on the project as a whole, the Prefect of Nièvre issued destruction and clearing licences to the companies concerned. These licences have been repeatedly put on hold by the administrative tribunal, which deemed inadequate the sections of the application dealing with the lack of a suitable alternative proposal, the conservation status of the species concerned and the overriding public interest that would justify the destruction involved.

What is more, owing to the sheer size of these projects, they can only be undertaken with major, exceptional funding from the European Union. The amount of funding requested, according to certain local representatives, could account for 75% of the investment in the industrial estate. Given the fundamental role of Tronçay forest as regards biodiversity protection, CO_2 storage and the environmentally sound management of water and biomass resources, such a project would hardly seem to qualify for EU funding, not least given the European Union's commitment to doing away with environmentally harmful subsidies.

In the light of the questions raised by numerous stakeholders and local elected representatives concerning the implications of and funding for this project, and the submission of two petitions to the European Parliament, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the potential breaches of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), and if so, what action does it intend to take?

2. Could the Commission confirm whether the project is eligible for EU funding and, if so, could it say whether the project has been selected or not?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of this project, which is the subject of petition 1215/2013 submitted to the European Parliament. The Commission has requested preliminary information from the French authorities about the project in view of assessing its compliance with EU environmental legislation. The project has been suggested by France to be co-funded by ERDF as a major project, but no official request has yet reached the Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003705/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(28 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Sigarette elettroniche

Lo scorso 25 marzo 2013, durante la riunione della commissione per l'agricoltura e lo sviluppo rurale, si è discusso della proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul ravvicinamento delle disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati membri relative alla lavorazione, alla presentazione e alla vendita dei prodotti del tabacco e dei prodotti correlati.

Data la mancata risposta da parte del rappresentante della Commissione europea presente in aula alle mie domande, vorrei qui di seguito riproporle in modalità scritta.

Faccio riferimento alle cosiddette sigarette elettroniche, dispositivi considerati come «Prodotti contenenti nicotina» e, quindi, rientranti nell'ambito dell'articolo 18 della proposta di direttiva precedentemente citata.

Vorrei, quindi, chiedere alla Commissione:

— Permettere la vendita delle sigarette elettroniche in varie tipologie di attività commerciali in base alla diversa concentrazione di nicotina non rischierebbe di creare confusione fra gli acquirenti?

— Non sarebbe opportuno svolgere indagini più approfondite sui possibili rischi di questi dispositivi e, soprattutto, sui loro liquidi nebulizzanti, perseguendo fino in fondo il principio di precauzione, prima di consentire una commercializzazione che potrebbe risultare inidonea? In Brasile, ad esempio, la vendita delle sigarette elettroniche è vietata, in attesa di avere a disposizione dati più affidabili sulla loro sicurezza.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(15 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle discussioni sui rischi sanitari associati alle sigarette elettroniche.

Conformemente alla proposta della Commissione relativa a una direttiva riveduta sui prodotti del tabacco, se contenessero livelli di nicotina al di là di certe soglie le sigarette elettroniche rientrerebbero nel quadro giuridico che si applica ai prodotti medicinali. Pertanto, in questi casi la loro immissione sul mercato richiederebbe l'autorizzazione preventiva prescritta dalla legislazione farmaceutica. La soglia di nicotina in questione è stata identificata sulla base del tenore di nicotina delle terapie di sostituzione della nicotina che hanno già ricevuto dagli Stati membri un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione.

Per le sigarette elettroniche che si situano al di sotto di tali soglie la proposta della Commissione prevede che esse rechino avvertimenti d'ordine sanitario. Esse dovrebbero inoltre ottemperare alla direttiva sulla sicurezza generale dei prodotti come avviene già ora.

In tal modo, la proposta della Commissione intende sia agevolare il funzionamento del mercato interno sia incoraggiare la ricerca, l'innovazione e lo sviluppo di prodotti che abbiano superato una valutazione rischi/benefici e che siano adatti alla disassuefazione dal fumo di tabacco. Poiché, secondo la proposta della Commissione, si stima che la maggior parte delle sigarette elettroniche rientrerebbe nel campo d'applicazione della legislazione farmaceutica, e sarebbe pertanto soggetta a un obbligo di autorizzazione per poter essere commercializzata, non vi sarebbe possibilità di confusione tra i diversi tipi di sigarette elettroniche (al di sopra o al di sotto della soglia di nicotina fissata) e si assicurerebbe uno standard di sicurezza elevato delle sigarette elettroniche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003705/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Electronic cigarettes

On 25 March 2013, during the meeting of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, there was a discussion of the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products.

Since there was no reply to my questions from the European Commission representative present on that occasion, I should like now to put them once again in written form, as follows.

I refer to the so-called electronic cigarettes, devices held to be 'products containing nicotine' and accordingly falling within the scope of Article 18 of the aforementioned proposal for a directive.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

— Would not allowing the sale of electronic cigarettes in various kinds of commercial activities on the basis of differing concentrations of nicotine run the risk of creating confusion among consumers?

— Would it not be a good idea to carry out more extensive inquiries into the possible risks of these devices and in particular into their vaporising liquids, taking the precautionary principle to its logical conclusion, before permitting a form of commercial exploitation which might turn out to be inappropriate? In Brazil, for example, the sale of electronic cigarettes is prohibited pending the availability of more reliable data on their safety.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of discussions about adverse health risks associated with electronic cigarettes.

According to the Commission proposal for a revised Tobacco Product Directive, electronic cigarettes would fall under the legal framework for medicinal products if they contain levels of nicotine above certain thresholds. Thus, in these cases, their bringing on the market would require prior authorisation under pharmaceutical legislation. The nicotine threshold in question has been identified by considering the nicotine content of nicotine replacement therapies that have already received a marketing authorisation by Member States.

For electronic cigarettes below the thresholds, the Commission proposal foresees that they carry health warnings. They would also have to comply with the General Product Safety Directive as it is the case at the moment.

In this way, the Commission proposal seeks both to facilitate the functioning of Internal Market and to encourage research, innovation and development of products which have undergone a prior risk/benefit balance and which are suitable for smoking cessation. Since the Commission proposal estimates that the majority of electronic cigarettes would fall under the pharmaceutical legislation, thus requiring market authorisation, there would be no confusion between different types of eCigarettes (above or below the nicotine threshold set) and a high safety standard for electronic cigarettes would be ensured.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003707/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Nuclear safety

1. What steps is the Commission taking to increase the openness and transparency of operations at nuclear sites in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear crisis?

2. What steps are Member States required to take to ensure that adequate numbers of trained employees who have consented to receive emergency radiation exposures are available to deal with an off-site radiation emergency at each nuclear site within that Member State?

3. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that off-site emergency planning arrangements for nuclear sites are adequate and comply with its requirements?

4. What regulations and guidelines are in place specifying the duties of nuclear site operators to consult with neighbouring communities and members of the public on off-site emergency arrangements, radiation safety, and operating arrangements at nuclear sites within the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

1. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to oral question O-000183/2012 by Amalia Sartori ([1]).

2. Council Directive 96/29/Euratom ([2]) requires each Member State to create, train and exercise special teams for technical and medical intervention to deal with radiological emergency situations. In addition, Member States are required to cooperate with other states for the implementation of interventions.

The proposed new BSS Directive ([3]) strengthens the existing requirements. It proposes that an emergency management system should be established to prepare for and respond to emergency exposure situations for the radiation protection of the public ([4]); clear allocation of responsibilities of persons and organisations, and response arrangements; training and exercising of those persons; public information arrangements; efficient communication and cooperation at the installation, local, national and international levels; and establishment of an emergency response plan related to a specific installation.

3. The Commission has launched a review of current off-site nuclear emergency preparedness and response arrangements in the EU Member States and neighbouring countries. This ongoing study shall review the status of emergency preparedness inside and between Member States, identify gaps and inconsistencies and make proposals for improvements ([5]).

4. Council Directive 89/618/Euratom ([6]) specifies the requirements to inform the general public about health protection measures in the event of a radiological emergency. The directive specifies the information to be provided both in the event of an emergency and before any emergency has taken place ([7]).

([1]) As mentioned in this reply, transparency is an area into which the Commission is currently looking, in order to formulate legislative proposals to strengthen the provisions of the Nuclear Safety Directive (Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, OJ L 172, 2.7.2009). Transparency of regulatory decisions and provision of information to the public by the regulatory body or the license holder could form part of this initiative.

([2]) Council Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13 May 1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation, OJ L 159, 29.6.1996 (BSS Directive).

([3]) Proposal for a Council Directive laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionizing radiation; COM(2012) 242.

([4]) Through prior assessment of potential emergency exposure situations.

([5]) The Commission intends to issue a communication on this topic before the end of 2013, based on the aforementioned study.

([6]) Council Directive 89/618/Euratom of 27 November 1989 on informing the general public about health protection measures to be applied and steps to be taken in the event of a radiological emergency, OJ L 357, 7.12.1989.

([7]) Guidelines for implementation of the directive are provided in Commission Communication 91/C 103/03, OJ C 103, 19.4.1991.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003708/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Sostenibilità energetica ed economica di cogeneratori a biomassa

Nel giugno 2012 la Regione Veneto ha autorizzato l'edificazione a Pederobba (provincia di Treviso) di un cogeneratore a biomasse per la produzione di energia elettrica, alimentato a oli vegetali, da 999 kW di potenza ([1]). Per cogenerazione si intende il processo di produzione simultanea di energia elettrica e di calore usufruibile per gli impianti di riscaldamento e/o per i processi produttivi-industriali. Nella maggior parte dei casi gli impianti di cogenerazione conferiscono calore già sfruttabile per edifici pubblici o privati. Lo scopo di queste apparecchiature è quindi quello di ottimizzare al massimo la trasformazione dell'energia primaria utilizzata in altre forme utili. L'impianto sopracitato è stato autorizzato nonostante sprechi quasi completamente la componente di energia termica da esso generata. Quest'ultima viene anche dissipata in aria, addirittura con l'ausilio di dissipatori funzionanti elettricamente, vanificando di fatto l'aspetto cogenerativo dell'impianto ([2]). Nella fattispecie in questione la realizzazione dell'impianto è stata approvata senza la presentazione di un «business plan» che certifichi la sostenibilità energetica ed economica. L'autorizzazione fa riferimento all'impiego di olio vegetale come combustibile senza specificarne con precisione la natura né la provenienza. Vi è quindi il concreto dubbio che il ritorno economico venga realizzato utilizzando combustibili a basso costo, con molta probabilità provenienti da continenti dove sono prodotti con un elevato impatto sulla biodiversità locale. Non solo, la Regione Veneto ha concesso la fabbricazione di decine di questi cogeneratori con autorizzazioni che evidentemente vanificano la valenza della cogenerazione in termini di sostenibilità energetica e ambientale. Detti impianti si avvalgono degli incentivi statali denominati «conto energia» (programma di incentivazione in conto esercizio della produzione di energia che mira ad acuire l'efficienza energetica e migliorare la sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento, definendo misure sulla cogenerazione ad alto rendimento di calore ed energia, basata sulla domanda di calore utile e sul risparmio di energia primaria, con particolare riferimento alle condizioni climatiche nazionali) destinati a sostenere fonti energetiche rinnovabili ([3]).

Ritiene la Commissione che questi impianti rispondano alle caratteristiche e alla legislazione europea in materia di risparmio energetico e uso razionale delle risorse e che siano meritevoli di essere sostenuti quali fonti energetiche rinnovabili?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2013)

La cogenerazione permette di sfruttare le risorse energetiche, compresi la biomassa e i biocarburanti, in modo efficiente. La legislazione dell'UE promuove l'uso della cogenerazione ad alto rendimento, definita come la cogenerazione che fornisce almeno il 10 % di risparmio di energia primaria ([4]).

In determinati casi, la legislazione dell'UE autorizza un sostegno finanziario a favore della cogenerazione ad alto rendimento. Uno dei requisiti è che il calore prodotto mediante cogenerazione soddisfi la domanda di calore utile. Questo obiettivo non può essere realizzato senza assicurare che il calore prodotto sia utilizzato efficacemente per soddisfare la domanda di raffreddamento e riscaldamento giustificabile dal punto di vista economico.

Secondo l'articolo 17 della direttiva 2009/28/CE sulle energie rinnovabili ([5]), i bioliquidi quali l'olio vegetale possono usufruire di un sostegno finanziario solo se rispettano i criteri di sostenibilità dell'UE, fra cui la riduzione del 35 % delle emissioni di gas serra rispetto ai combustibili fossili e l'obbligo che le materie prime non provengano da paesi con un elevato valore in termini di biodiversità e un elevato stock di carbonio.

([1]) Delibera della Giunta regionale n. 2073 dell'11.10.2012 — Ditta «Laser Industries S.r.l.» — Autorizzazione unica alla costruzione e l'esercizio di un impianto di produzione di energia elettrica alimentato a fonte rinnovabile del tipo olio vegetale.

([2]) Relazione di Sinergo S.p.A., punto 6, pag.14, in risposta alle richieste di integrazioni della Commissione tecnica regionale ambiente del 4.8.2011.

([3]) Decreto legislativo 8/02/2007, n. 20, Attuazione della direttiva 2004/8/CE sulla promozione della cogenerazione basata su una domanda di calore utile nel mercato interno dell'energia, nonché modifica alla direttiva 92/42/CEE.

([4]) Allegato III, lettera a), della direttiva 2004/8/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 febbraio 2004, sulla promozione della cogenerazione basata su una domanda di calore utile nel mercato interno dell'energia e che modifica la direttiva 92/42/CEE, GU L52 del 21.2.2004, pag. 50, allegato II, lettera a), della direttiva 2012/27/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2012, sull'efficienza energetica, che modifica le direttive 2009/125/CE e 2010/30/UE e abroga le direttive 2004/8/CE e 2006/32/CE, GU L 315 del 14.11.2012, pag. 31.

([5]) Direttiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2009, sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili, recante modifica e successiva abrogazione delle direttive 2001/77/CE e 2003/30/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003708/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Energy efficiency and economic sustainability of biomass cogenerators

In June 2012 the Veneto Region authorised the building, in Pederobba (Treviso province), of a biomass-fuelled cogenerator for the production of electricity, powered by vegetable oils, from 999 kW of power ([1]). Cogeneration is the process whereby both electricity and heat that can be used for heating and/or for industrial production processes are simultaneously generated. In most cases cogeneration plants produce heat that is already usable for public or private buildings. The purpose of this equipment is therefore to optimise the transformation of primary energy into other useful forms. The cogenerator mentioned above has been authorised despite the fact that it almost completely wastes the thermal energy it generates. This energy is even being dissipated in the air, with the aid of electrically operated heat sinks, thereby thwarting the cogeneration aspect of the plant ([2]).

In this specific case the building of the plant was approved without the submission of any business plan certifying its energy efficiency and economic sustainability. The authorisation refers to the use of vegetable oil as fuel, without specifying what kind of oil it is or where it comes from. There is thus a real doubt that profits will be made by using low-cost fuel, which will most likely be produced in continents where it has a high impact on local biodiversity. In addition, the Veneto Region has approved the building of dozens of these cogenerators, issuing authorisations that clearly negate the value of cogeneration in terms of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. These plants take advantage of the government incentives known as *'conto energia'* (an incentive programme for current operating expenses relating to energy production, aiming to increase energy efficiency and improve security of supply by developing measures concerning the high efficiency cogeneration of heat and energy based on useful heat demand and primary energy savings, with particular reference to national climatic conditions), designed to support renewable energy sources ([3]).

Does the Commission believe that these plants fulfil the criteria and comply with EU legislation in the field of energy saving and rational use of resources and that they are worthy of being supported as renewable energy sources?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

Cogeneration makes it possible to use energy resources, including biomass and biofuels, in an efficient way. The EU legislation promotes the use of high-efficiency cogeneration, which is defined as cogeneration achieving at least 10% primary energy saving ([4]).

Under certain conditions, the EU legislation allows high-efficiency cogeneration to be eligible for support. One of these conditions is that the heat produced in the cogeneration satisfies useful heat demand. This cannot be achieved without ensuring that the heat produced is effectively used to satisfy economically justifiable demand for heating or cooling.

According to Article 71 of Directive 2009/28/EC on renewable energies ([5]), bioliquids such as vegetable oil are eligible to financial support only provided that they meet the EU sustainability criteria, including reducing GHG emissions by 35% compared to fossil fuels and the raw material is not sourced from land with high biodiversity value and high carbon stocks.

([1]) Regional Council Resolution No 2073 of 11.10.2012 — Company 'Laser Industries Srl' — Single authorisation for the construction and operation of an electricity production plant fuelled by renewable sources such as vegetable oil.

([2]) Report by Sinergo Spa, point 6, page 14, in response to the requests for further details of 4.8.2011 from the Regional Technical Committee on the Environment.

([3]) Legislative Decree No 20 of 8.2.2007 — Implementation of Directive 2004/8/EC on the promotion of cogeneration based on a useful heat demand in the internal energy market and amending Directive 92/42/EEC.

([4]) Annex III(a) of Directive 2004/8/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 on the promotion of cogeneration based on a useful heat demand in the internal energy market and amending Directive 92/42/EEC, OJ L 52, 21.2.2004, p. 50, Annex II(a) of Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC, OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 31.

([5]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-003709/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(28 martie 2013)

Subiect: Dezvoltarea și păstrarea pe teritoriul UE a industriei siderurgice europene

Prin rezoluția sa din 13 decembrie 2012 referitoare la industria siderurgică din UE (P7_TA(2012)0509), Parlamentul European a invitat Comisia să monitorizeze îndeaproape evoluțiile viitoare din cadrul unităților situate la Florange, Liège, Terni, Galați, Schifflange, Piombino, Câmpia Turzii, Rodange, Oțelu Roșu, Trieste, Silesia, Reșița, Târgoviște, Călărași, Hunedoara, Buzău, Brăila, Borlänge, Luleå, Oxelösund etc. Această monitorizare este necesară întrucât integritatea acestor unități este în pericol și pentru a ne asigura că păstrăm competitivitatea sectorului siderurgic european, precum și locurile de muncă din acest sector pe teritoriul UE. De asemenea, Comisia a fost invitată să reflecteze atent asupra unor inițiative pe termen mediu și lung de sprijinire și menținere a industriei siderurgice și a sectoarelor din aval.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri a luat pentru supravegherea integrității industriei siderurgice pe teritoriul UE, precum și pentru dezvoltarea și păstrarea pe teritoriul UE a industriei siderurgice, având în vedere importanța strategică a acesteia pentru economia, pentru competitivitatea și pentru locurile de muncă din UE?

De asemenea, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere pentru a asigura eficiența, rentabilitatea și competitivitatea sectorului siderurgic european?

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a evita distrugerea și vânzarea la fier vechi a unor utilaje și instalații de producție existente în cadrul unităților siderurgice menționate anterior?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(7 mai 2013)

Comisia împărtășește opiniile distinsului membru cu privire la importanța strategică a industriei siderurgice pentru UE, precum și cu privire la importanța asigurării competitivității și a locurilor de muncă. Acesta este motivul pentru care Comisia a convocat, în iulie 2012, o masă rotundă la nivel înalt privind viitorul industriei siderurgice europene ca o platformă de dialog între Comisie, industrie și sindicate. În 2012 au avut loc două reuniuni în cursul cărora masa rotundă a efectuat o evaluare a principalelor provocări și factori care afectează competitivitatea. A treia reuniune a mesei rotunde din februarie 2013 a adoptat un set de recomandări strategice la adresa Comisiei și a statelor membre.

Comisia intenționează să dea curs acestor recomandări până în iunie 2013, printr-un plan de acțiune pentru industria siderurgică din UE. Planul de acțiune va stabili o strategie de politică pentru ansamblul UE cu scopul de a garanta instituirea condițiilor-cadru adecvate. Aceasta va fi apoi transmisă Parlamentului European și Consiliului pentru adoptarea unor măsuri corespunzătoare.

În cadrul planului de acțiune, Comisia intenționează să propună acțiuni destinate să răspundă provocărilor identificate, cu scopul de a menține un sector siderurgic dinamic, competitiv și durabil în Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003709/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Development of the European steel industry and its preservation on EU territory

In its resolution of 13 December 2012 on the EU steel industry (P7_TA-PROV(2012)0509), Parliament called on the Commission to monitor closely future developments in the plants located in Florange, Liège, Terni, Galaţi, Schifflange, Piombino, Câmpia Turzii, Rodange, Oţelu Roşu, Trieste, Silesia, Reşiţa, Târgovişte, Călăraşi, Hunedoara, Buzău, Brăila, Borlänge, Luleå, Oxelösund and elsewhere. This monitoring is necessary because the integrity of these plants is at risk, and we need to safeguard the competitiveness of the European steel sector and preserve jobs. The Commission was also called on to reflect carefully on medium- and long-term initiatives to support and preserve the steel industry and its downstream sectors.

What action has the Commission taken to monitor the integrity of the steel industry on EU territory and develop and preserve it, bearing in mind its strategic importance for the EU economy, competitiveness and jobs?

What action will the Commission take to safeguard the efficiency, profitability and competitiveness of the European steel industry?

What measures is the Commission considering, in cooperation with the Member States, to prevent machinery and production units in the above steel plants from being destroyed and sold for scrap?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member with regards to the strategic importance of the steel industry for the EU as well as with regards to the importance of ensuring competitiveness and jobs. This is why the Commission convoked in July 2012 a High-Level Roundtable on the future of the European steel industry as a platform for dialogue between the Commission, industry and trade unions. Two meetings took place in 2012 during which the Roundtable carried out an assessment of key challenges and factors affecting competitiveness. The third meeting of the Roundtable in February 2013 adopted a set of policy recommendations to the Commission and Member States.

The Commission plans to respond to these recommendations, by June 2013 through an Action Plan for the EU steel industry. The action plan will set up an EU-wide policy strategy aiming to ensure that the right framework conditions are in place. It will then be forwarded to the European Parliament and the Council for appropriate action.

In the action plan the Commission intends to propose actions to respond to the challenges identified, in order to keep a dynamic, competitive and sustainable steel sector in Europe.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003711/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Introduction of capital controls in Cyprus and Article 26 of the TFEU

Article 26 of the consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) clearly states that the 'internal market shall comprise an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured …'.

Following the Eurogroup's agreement with the Cypriot authorities on a macroeconomic adjustment programme, people leaving Cyprus can take no more than EUR 1 000 out of the country and payments and/or transfers outside Cyprus via debit or credit cards are restricted to EUR 5 000 per month.

Can the Commission, in its role as the 'guardian of the treaties', express an opinion on whether it regards the capital controls introduced in Cyprus to be in accordance with the Treaties, in particular Article 26 of the TFEU?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities decided to introduce emergency restrictions on banking operations (limits on withdrawals, restrictions on early termination of deposits and other banking operations) under exceptional circumstances. The Commission, as a guardian of the Treaty, is closely monitoring the situation which is unprecedented at the EU level.

Article 65 TFEU provides for exceptions to the free movements of capital, one of the fundamental principles of the internal market established under Article 26 TFEU.

The Commission acknowledges that, taking into account the emergency situation and the significant risk of an uncontrollable outflow of deposits, temporary unilateral restrictions were justified in the overriding public interest of Cypriot society in the given circumstances.

Nevertheless, such restrictions constitute a serious limitation to the free movement of capital and the Commission will insist, that these measures last no longer than strictly necessary and are gradually relaxed and lifted with the view to reinstating the free movement of capital as soon as possible. To this end, services of the Commission and other competent bodies will closely monitor the situation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-003712/13
au Conseil
Frédéric Daerden (S&D)
(3 avril 2013)

Objet: Dumping social entre États membres au préjudice des travailleurs

Des déclarations officielles récentes de ministres belges ont mis en évidence l'existence sans cesse croissante de dumping social dans certains États membres, en Allemagne notamment, préjudiciable aux travailleurs et aussi aux PME d'autres États membres, dont la Belgique.

Il s'agit avant tout de pratiques abusives de certaines entreprises profitant de carences dans les législations sociales nationales et même européennes comme: l'absence de salaire minimum garanti, existence de sociétés fictives «boîtes aux lettres», absence ou différences de contrôles du respect des conditions de travail, aussi par les sous-traitants, etc.

Le Conseil peut-il faire savoir si le projet de directive d'exécution clarifiant la mise en œuvre des règles de 1996 relatives au détachement des travailleurs (96/71/CE), qu'il examine actuellement, constitue l'instrument législatif approprié pour remédier à ces abus responsables de délocalisations d'un État membre vers un autre plus laxiste et à ces pratiques de concurrence déloyale?

Le Conseil peut-il préciser quand il envisage de terminer l'examen de cette proposition, et en particulier les points cruciaux et litigieux de la liste des mesures administratives de contrôle et de l'introduction progressive et/ou volontaire du principe de responsabilité conjointe et solidaire qui permet de poursuivre et le sous-traitant et l'employeur principal?

Le Conseil ne considère-t-il pas que la compétitivité d'un État membre ne doit pas se faire grâce au dumping social, au détriment d'autres États membres, avec des conséquences désastreuses pour les travailleurs?

Réponse
(1er juillet 2013)

Le 21 mars 2012, la Commission a présenté une proposition de directive relative à l'exécution de la directive 96/71/CE concernant le détachement de travailleurs effectué dans le cadre d'une prestation de services ([1]). La proposition vise, à l'échelle de l'Union, à améliorer la façon dont ladite directive est mise en œuvre, appliquée et exécutée dans la pratique, en établissant un cadre général commun de dispositions et de mesures appropriées à cet effet, ainsi que des mesures destinées à prévenir le contournement ou la violation des règles applicables. La proposition établit entre autres des règles plus claires visant à renforcer la coopération entre les autorités nationales, notamment par le recours au système d'information du marché intérieur aux fins de l'échange d'informations entre ces autorités.

Comme l'Honorable Parlementaire n'est pas sans savoir, l'examen de la proposition est en cours au Conseil. Des progrès significatifs ont été réalisés sur la plus grande partie de la proposition. Le 6 décembre 2012, le Conseil a tenu un débat d'orientation sur les articles 9 (concernant la liste des mesures nationales de contrôle) et 12 (relatif à la responsabilité solidaire) ([2]). Ces articles font actuellement l'objet d'un examen approfondi au niveau technique, tout comme les autres questions encore en suspens.

([1]) doc. 8040/12.
([2]) doc. 16637/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003712/13
to the Council
Frédéric Daerden (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Social dumping between Member States to the detriment of workers

Recent official statements by Belgian ministers have highlighted the steadily growing incidence of social dumping in some Member States, particularly Germany. This is damaging to both workers and small and medium-sized-businesses in other Member States, including Belgium.

This problem manifests itself primarily in unlawful practices employed by certain companies in order to take advantage of loopholes in national and European labour law: the lack of a guaranteed minimum wage, the existence of fictitious 'letter-box' companies and the non-enforcement, or disparities in the enforcement, of rules on working conditions, including as regards subcontractors, etc.

Can the Council state whether the draft implementing directive clarifying the application of the 1996 rules on the posting of workers (Directive 96/71/EC), which it is currently considering, is the appropriate legislative instrument to remedy these abuses, which involve workers being relocated from one Member State to another where rules are less strictly enforced, and practices which amount to unfair competition?

Can the Council specify when it plans to complete its consideration of this proposal, in particular the crucial and contentious points on the list of administrative control measures and the gradual and/or voluntary introduction of the principle of joint and several liability, which makes it possible for legal action to be taken against both the subcontractor and the main employer?

Does the Council not take the view that a Member State must not be allowed to maintain competitiveness by means of social dumping, to the detriment of other Member States, with disastrous consequences for workers?

Reply
(1 July 2013)

On 21 March 2012 the Commission submitted a proposal for a directive on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services ([1]). The proposal aims to improve, enhance and reinforce the way in which this directive is implemented, applied and enforced in practice across the European Union. This is done by establishing a general common framework of appropriate provisions and measures for better and more uniform implementation, application and enforcement of the directive, including measures to prevent any circumvention or abuse of the rules. The proposal establishes *inter alia* clearer rules to strengthen cooperation between national authorities, including the use of the internal market Information System for the exchange of information between them.

As the Honourable Member is aware, examination of the proposal is ongoing in the Council. Major progress has been achieved on most parts of the proposal. On 6 December 2012, an orientation debate was held by the Council on Articles 9 (regarding the list of administrative control measures) and 12 (on joint and several liability) ([2]). These Articles are currently being discussed in detail at technical level, together with the remaining outstanding issues.

([1]) 8040/12.
([2]) 16637/12.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003713/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Modificaciones en la denominación de origen «Queso del Roncal»

La Comisión Europea debe pronunciarse en los próximos meses sobre la oposición de asociaciones de productores, sindicatos agrarios de Navarra e instituciones regionales del departamento francés de los Pirineos Atlánticos, a la modificación del Reglamento de la denominación de origen «Queso del Roncal» (2012/C 294/08). A esos posicionamientos se ha unido desde enero una resolución aprobada por el Parlamento Foral de Navarra.

Dichas entidades consideran que autorizar leche de ovejas de la raza Asaff incumple el Reglamento (CE) n° 510/2006 del Consejo porque es de explotación intensiva, rompe el vínculo entre ganado y área de producción y vulnera el principio de que la materia prima es determinante para fijar las cualidades y calidad del producto final. La decisión (2012/C 294/08) afecta además a una zona transfronteriza. Por ello, otra de las entidades que se opone a la modificación es la denominación «Ossau-Iraty» que trabaja sobre los mismos parámetros de calidad y utilización de razas autóctonas y considera que el cambio distorsionará la competencia entre denominaciones que operan sobre el mismo segmento de mercado.

A la vista de las dudas de carácter jurídico que suscita el cambio y la abrumadora y mayoritaria oposición de productores y afectados:

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión acelerar los trámites para reconsiderar la referida decisión?

2. ¿En qué plazo espera resolver sobre los escritos de oposición?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que la inclusión de una raza foránea e intensiva como la Asaff es compatible con la exigencia de que la base de la alimentación de las ovejas de la denominación sea el pastoreo?

4. ¿Qué opinión le merece la rotunda oposición que ha cosechado el cambio entre los productores teniendo en cuenta que el 90 % de los pastores de la denominación se oponen activamente al mismo?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de mayo de 2013)

Tras analizar la solicitud de modificación y el documento único del «Queso del Roncal», la Comisión ha considerado que se cumplían las condiciones establecidas en el Reglamento (CE) n° 510/2006 ([1]) y, consiguientemente, ha publicado esos documentos para que las autoridades de otros Estados miembros o de terceros países o cualquier persona física o jurídica que tuviera un interés legítimo pudiera presentar una declaración de oposición. El periodo para oponerse a la modificación finalizó el 2 de abril de 2013. En ese plazo, la Comisión recibió una declaración de oposición cuya admisibilidad está analizando. Si la oposición resulta admisible, en el plazo de dos meses a partir de su recepción la Comisión invitará a la autoridad o persona que la ha presentado y a las autoridades españolas a proceder a las consultas adecuadas en un periodo que no podrá ser superior a tres meses, aunque la Comisión podrá prorrogarlo otros tres meses, como máximo.

De alcanzarse un acuerdo en esas consultas, la Comisión registrará la denominación. En caso contrario, la Comisión tomará una decisión, teniendo en cuenta los argumentos expuestos en la declaración de oposición.

En la fase actual del procedimiento, la Comisión no puede pronunciarse sobre el fondo de los argumentos expuestos en la declaración de oposición ni sobre la fecha en que se tomará la decisión final.

([1]) DO L 93 de 31.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003713/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Changes to the 'Roncal Cheese' designation of origin

Over the coming months, the European Commission will have to rule on the objection to changes to the rules governing the 'Roncal Cheese' designation of origin (2012/C 294/08), lodged by producers' associations, Navarrese agricultural unions, and regional institutions from the French department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques. Since January, this objection has been bolstered by a resolution adopted by the Parliament of Navarre.

These bodies believe that authorising milk from Assaf sheep breaches Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006, as this milk is a product of intensive farming and using it would break the link between livestock and production area, as well as violating the principle that the characteristics and quality of the end product are determined by the raw material. The decision (2012/C 294/08) also affects a cross-border area. Consequently, the change is also opposed by bodies representing the 'Ossau-Iraty' designation of origin, which work within the same quality parameters using native breeds and believe that the change will distort competition among designations of origin active in the same market segment.

Given the legal questions surrounding the change and the overwhelming opposition among producers and those affected:

1. Will the Commission speed up the proceedings in order to reconsider this decision?

2. Within what time frame does the Commission expect to rule on the statements of objection?

3. Does the Commission think that the inclusion of a non-native, intensively farmed breed, such as Assaf sheep, is compatible with the requirement that the diet of the sheep within this designation of origin be based on grazing?

4. What view does it take on the strong opposition to the change among producers, considering that 90% of the farmers producing products with this designation of origin actively oppose it?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Based on an analysis of the amendment request and the single document for 'Roncal', the Commission has considered that the conditions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ([1]) are fulfilled. Therefore, it has published these documents in order to allow the authorities of other Member States or of a third country and natural and legal persons with a legitimate interest, to lodge an opposition. The period of opposition ended on the 2nd of April 2013. The Commission did receive a declaration of opposition and is currently analysing its admissibility. If this opposition is found admissible, the Commission shall within two months of receipt invite the authority or person that lodged the opposition and the Spanish authorities to engage in appropriate consultations for a period that shall not exceed three months. The Commission may extend this deadline by a maximum of three months.

If an agreement is reached in these consultations, the Commission shall register the name. If an agreement has not been reached, the Commission shall decide on the registration, taking into account the arguments raised in the opposition.

At this stage of the procedure, the Commission cannot pronounce itself on the substance of the arguments raised in the opposition, nor on the date by when a final decision will be taken.

([1]) OJ L 93, 31.3.2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003714/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Armut in Griechenland — Verschlimmerung der Situation der Familien

In den letzten Monaten haben sich in Griechenland die sozialen Verhältnisse drastisch verschlechtert und bei vielen Menschen zu einer Zuspitzung der familiären Situation geführt:

Kinder müssen freiwillig in Heime gegeben werden, weil es nicht mehr leistbar ist, für sie im Familienverband zu sorgen.

Zu Beginn der Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise betraf Armut vor allem besonders gefährdete Gruppen (wie alleinerziehende Frauen, kinderreiche Familien, usw.), mittlerweile ist auch die einst solide Mittelschicht oft nicht mehr fähig, Miete oder Nahrungsmittel für die ganze Familie zu bezahlen, und muss ein oder mehrere Kinder in Heimen unterbringen.

1. Ist der Kommission die oben geschilderte Situation bekannt?

2. Sind bereits (Hilfs-)Maßnahmen für griechische Familien auf europäischer Ebene geplant?

3. Sind bereits Maßnahmen geplant, um in anderen — besonders von der Finanzkrise betroffenen — Ländern dafür zu sorgen, dass eine solche Situation nicht eintritt?

4. Sind bereits Maßnahmen geplant, um die finanziell und personell überlasteten Hilfsorganisationen in Griechenland zu unterstützen?

5. Wie wirkt sich die jüngste Entwicklung in Zypern auf humanitärer Ebene auf Griechenland aus? Gibt es hierzu schon erste Beobachtungen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(7. Juni 2013)

1. Der Kommission sind die Armut und die sich verschlechternde Lage von Familien in Griechenland bekannt.

2. Der Europäische Sozialfonds (ESF) leistet in Griechenland durch die Kofinanzierung einer Reihe von Maßnahmen Unterstützung für die am stärksten gefährdeten Gruppen. Beispielsweise unterstützt der ESF im Rahmen des operationellen Programms zur Entwicklung der Humanressourcen (HRD) die Einrichtung oder den fortgesetzten Betrieb von sozialen Strukturen, z. B. von Sozialsupermärkten, Sozialapotheken, offenen Tageszentren für Obdachlose, und bezuschusst die Beschäftigung junger arbeitsloser Menschen in diesen Strukturen. Man geht davon aus, dass die Einrichtung und der Betrieb der rund 200 sozialen Strukturen rund 70 000 Menschen zugute kommt.

3. Die Absicherung durch ein soziales Sicherheitsnetz, das die Auswirkungen der Arbeitslosigkeit mildert, liegt in der Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten. Allerdings ermutigt die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten nachdrücklich dazu, wirksame und effiziente Sozialschutzsysteme zu entwickeln und aufrechtzuerhalten. Ein gut konzipierter Sozialschutz, der auch angemessene Einkommensunterstützung, integrative Arbeitsmärkte und den Zugang zu hochwertigen Dienstleistungen ([1]) umfasst, ist entscheidend, um die sozialen Folgen der Wirtschaftskrise aufzufangen.

4. Im Rahmen der geteilten Mittelverwaltung gemäß der Strukturfondsverordnung ([2]) und vor dem Hintergrund der auf EU- und nationaler Ebene geltenden Regeln für die Förderfähigkeit kann die griechische Regierung ESF-Mittel zur Unterstützung von Hilfsorganisationen verwenden.

5. Die Auswirkungen der Entwicklungen in Zypern scheinen insgesamt begrenzt zu sein ([3]).

([1]) Siehe Empfehlung 2008/867/EG der Kommission vom 3.10.2008 zur aktiven Eingliederung der aus dem Arbeitsmarkt ausgegrenzten Personen (ABl. L 307 vom 18.11.2008, S. 11).
([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 des Rates, ABl. L 210 vom 31.7.2006.
([3]) Siehe Kasten 2, „Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, Second Review — May 2013“ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003714/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Poverty in Greece — Worsening of the situation for families

Social conditions have worsened dramatically in recent months and for many people have led to worse conditions for their families. People are having to put children into care voluntarily because they can no longer afford to care for them within the family.

At the beginning of the financial and economic crisis, vulnerable groups (such as single mothers, large families, etc.) were most affected by poverty, but in the meantime the once-comfortable middle classes are often no longer able to pay for rent or food for the entire family and are having to send one or more children into care.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Are there already plans at European level to provide assistance to Greek families?

3. Are measures being planned to ensure that a similar situation does not arise in other countries, particularly in those affected by the financial crisis?

4. Are measures being planned to support the aid organisations in Greece that are overstrained both financially and in terms of staffing?

5. What impact will the latest development in Cyprus have on Greece in humanitarian terms? Has anything been observed in this regard yet?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the situation relating to poverty and the worsening situation of families in Greece.

2. The European Social Fund (ESF) in Greece provides assistance to the most vulnerable groups with the co-financing of a series of interventions. For example, through the 'Human Resources Development Operational Programme' (HRD OP), the ESF supports the establishment or continued operation of social structures such as social groceries, social pharmacies, open centres for the daily reception of homeless and subsidises the employment of young unemployed people in these structures. Around 70 000 people are expected to benefit from the creation and operation of about 200 social structures.

3. The provision of a social safety net to mitigate the effects of unemployment is the responsibility of Member States. The Commission, however, strongly encourages Member States to design and maintain effective and efficient social protection systems. Well-designed social protection — including adequate income support, inclusive labour markets, and access to enabling services ([1]) — is crucial to address the social consequences of the economic crisis.

4. In the context of shared management, as provided in the Structural Funds regulation ([2]), and of EU and national eligibility rules, the Greek Government may use ESF financing to support aid organisations.

5. The fallout from the developments in Cyprus appears overall limited ([3]).

([1]) See Commission Recommendation of 3.10.2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market (2008/867/EC published in the OJ L 307/11, 18.11.2008).
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, OJ L 210, 31 July 2006.
([3]) See Box 2 in 'Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, Second Review — May 2013.' http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003715/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Extremismus — Gefahr für Jugendliche

Extremismus wird zu einem zunehmenden Problem, insbesondere Jugendliche werden aktiv für Organisationen mit verfassungs- und demokratiefeindlichen Einstellungen angeworben, ausgebildet und indoktriniert. In einer globalisierten Gesellschaft ist es imperativ, in diesem Bereich auf supranationaler Ebene zusammenzuarbeiten. Sowohl die Mitglieder der Gruppierungen als auch das sympathisierende Umfeld müssen aktiv über Ausstiegsangebote und -szenarien informiert werden. Unabhängig von der politischen Ausrichtung der gewaltbereiten Organisationen (links-/rechtsradikal/religiös extremistisch) müssen insbesondere Jugendliche durch Präventions- und Sozialarbeit aufgefangen werden.

1. Ist der Kommission die oben genannte Problematik bekannt?

2. Gibt es bereits EU-weite Programme zur Prävention, oder sind Maßnahmen in Planung?

3. Sind konkrete Zahlen zu Jugendlichen in der EU bekannt, die bereits Mitglieder von extremistischen Gruppen sind bzw. mit ihnen sympathisieren?

4. Ist der Kommission die verstärkende Wirkung des Internets in Bezug auf Rekrutierung und Informationsweitergabe bekannt und gibt es bereits Kooperation zu diesem Thema?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(28. Mai 2013)

Der Kommission ist sich des Potenzials für gewaltbereiten Extremismus bei Jugendlichen und der damit verbundenen Risikofaktoren bewusst. Ihr liegen keine konkreten Zahlen darüber vor, wie viele Jugendliche extremistischen Gruppen angehören oder mit ihnen sympathisieren.

Junge Menschen sind naturgemäß besonders anfällig sind für vielerlei Einflüsse. Dies kann von Radikalisierern ausgenutzt werden. Zu den wichtigsten Vektoren der Radikalisierung von Jugendlichen gehören das Internet und soziale Medien, über die extremistisches Gedankengut und Propaganda sehr schnell und weit verbreitet werden können. Die Ursachen des Phänomens lassen sich jedoch nicht einfach durch eine Reihe von Faktoren erklären, wie die Kommission bereits in ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-3557/2013 erläutert hat. Das Internet wird dann als „Informationsinstrument“ oder als Mittel zur Anwerbung von Sympathisanten über Foren und Chatrooms genutzt.

Folglich gibt es kein spezifisches Profil radikalisierter oder potenziell radikalisierter Jugendlicher, das es ermöglichen würde, alle möglichen gewalttätigen und extremistischen Verhaltensweisen Jugendlicher vorherzusehen.

Vorbeugende Maßnahmen, mit denen verhindert werden soll, dass Jugendliche zu Gewalt greifen, sind Teil der umfassenden Strategie der Kommission zur Unterstützung der Mitgliedstaaten bei der Bekämpfung von gewalttätigem Extremismus. Die Hauptverantwortung bleibt dabei auf lokaler und nationaler Ebene. Diese Strategie erfordert die Beteiligung zahlreicher Akteure. Das ist der Leitgedanke des Aufklärungsnetzwerks gegen Radikalisierung (Radicalisation Awareness Network — RAN), das mit einem breiten Spektrum von Akteuren aus ganz Europa arbeitet, um Informationen darüber zusammenzutragen und auszutauschen, wie dem Risiko der gewaltbereiten Radikalisierung auch bei Jugendlichen am besten entgegen gewirkt werden kann. Einzelheiten zum RAN sind in den Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-1018/2013 und 3557/2013 zu finden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003715/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Extremism — A danger for young people

Extremism is a growing problem. Young people in particular are being actively recruited, trained and indoctrinated by anti-constitutional and anti-democratic organisations. In a globalised society it is imperative to work together supranationally in this area. Members of the groups and those sympathetic to them must be actively informed about ways and means of leaving. Regardless of the political orientation of these violent organisations (extreme left/extreme right/religious extremism), young people in particular must be picked up through prevention and social work.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Are there any EU-wide prevention programmes or any plans for this type of programme?

3. Are there any concrete figures on young people in the EU who are already members of extremist groups or are sympathetic to them?

4. Is the Commission aware of the reinforcing effect of the Internet on recruitment and the dissemination of information and is there any cooperation in this area?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the potential for violent extremism among young people and the specific risk factors related to it. The Commission does not have specific data on the number of young people involved in extremist groups or sympathetic to them.

Youth is by definition a period of vulnerability which can be exploited by radicalisers. One of the most important vectors of youth radicalisation remains Internet and social media, which allow for very fast and broad dissemination of extremist narratives and propaganda. However, the underlying causes of the phenomenon cannot be simply explained by one set of factors, as outlined in the Commission response to Written Question E-3557/2013. The Internet is then used as an 'information tool' or a way to engage with other sympathisers through forums and chat rooms.

Consequently, there is no specific profile of radicalised or potentially radicalised young people, which would allow anticipation of all possible violent extremist behaviours among young people.

Preventing young people from being drawn into violence is part of the comprehensive approach that the Commission uses to assist Member States in addressing violent extremism, bearing in mind that the primary responsibility remains at local and national level. This approach implies the involvement of multiple players. This is the philosophy behind the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) working with a wide range of practitioners from all over Europe to gather and exchange information on how best to mitigate the risk of violent radicalisation, including among young people. Details of the RAN have been provided in answers to written questions E-1018/2013 and 3557/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003716/13
an den Rat
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Folgeanfrage zur finanziellen Stabilität Zyperns

In seiner Antwort auf die Anfrage vom 28. Jänner 2011 (E-000430/2011) zu dem Thema „Finanzielle Stabilität Zyperns" schloss der Rat die Notwendigkeit weiterer Schritte im Rahmen des Defizitverfahrens aus.

Angesichts der jüngsten Entwicklungen in der Republik Zypern, die sich schon lange vorher (zumindest seit 2010) angekündigt haben, stellen sich die folgenden dringenden Fragen (mit der Bitte um ausführliche Beantwortung):

1. Auf welcher Grundlage basiert die Einschätzung des Rates (in seiner oben zitierten Antwort)?

2. Wie ist es zu erklären, dass die vorgeschlagenen Maßnahmen (Haushaltskonsolidierung usw.) nicht zum erwarteten Erfolg (finanzielle Stabilität Zyperns) geführt haben?)

3. Wäre ein früheres Eingreifen von EU-Organen wünschenswert gewesen?

4. Wie ist die Einschätzung für die kommenden Monate, was die finanzielle Entwicklung Zyperns angeht?

5. Wird die Situation in Zypern auch Effekte auf andere kleine und mittlere Staaten der EU haben?

Antwort
(17. Juni 2013)

Der Rat weist die Frau Abgeordnete darauf hin, dass die zyprischen Behörden im Juni 2012 angesichts der Herausforderungen, mit denen Zypern insbesondere aufgrund der Notsituation im Bankensektor und des Vorhandenseins von makroökonomischen Ungleichgewichten konfrontiert war, einen Antrag auf finanziellen Beistand der Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets gestellt haben.

Am 12. April 2013 begrüßte die Euro-Gruppe die Vereinbarung auf Stabsebene über die politischen Auflagen, die dem makroökonomischen Anpassungsprogramm zugrunde liegen. Die Gruppe stellte ferner fest, dass die zyprischen Behörden entscheidende Bankenabwicklungs-, Umstrukturierungs- und Rekapitalisierungsmaßnahmen umgesetzt hatten, um der instabilen und bisher ungekannten Lage im zyprischen Finanzsektor Herr zu werden.

Am 25. April 2013 erließ der Rat einen an Zypern gerichteten Beschluss über spezifische Maßnahmen zur Wiederherstellung der Finanzstabilität und des nachhaltigen Wachstums. Nach diesem Beschluss wird Zypern konsequent ein makroökonomisches Anpassungsprogramm umsetzen, das dazu beitragen soll, die zyprische Wirtschaft wieder auf einen Weg zu bringen, der zu nachhaltigem Wachstum sowie zu Haushalts- und Finanzstabilität führt.

Das Programm wird der Bewältigung der von Zypern ausgehenden Risiken für die Finanzstabilität des Euro-Währungsgebiets dienen und auf eine rasche Wiederherstellung einer gesunden und nachhaltigen Wirtschafts- und Finanzlage Zyperns sowie die Rückkehr zur vollständigen Finanzierung des Landes über die internationalen Finanzmärkte abstellen. Mit dem Programm werden folgende Hauptziele verfolgt: Wiederherstellung eines soliden zyprischen Bankensektors, Fortsetzung des laufenden Prozesses der Haushaltskonsolidierung sowie Durchführung von Strukturreformen zur Förderung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und eines nachhaltigen und ausgewogenen Wachstums.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003716/13
to the Council
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question on the financial stability of Cyprus

In its answer to the question of 28 January 2011 (E-000430/2011) on the subject of the financial stability of Cyprus, the Council excluded the need for further steps under the EDP.

In view of the latest developments in the Republic of Cyprus, which have been on the cards for a long time (at least since 2010), I should like to ask the following urgent questions (with a request for a detailed answer).

1. What is the basis for the Council's assessment (in its abovementioned answer)?

2. Why have the proposed measures (budgetary consolidation, etc.) not led to the successful outcome expected (financial stability of Cyprus)?

3. Would earlier action from the EU institutions have been desirable?

4. What is the outlook for the coming months in terms of Cyprus's financial development?

5. Will the situation in Cyprus also have an impact on other small and medium-sized EU Member States?

Reply
(17 June 2013)

The Council would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that in June 2012 the Cypriot authorities requested financial assistance from euro area Member States in view of the challenges that Cyprus was facing, in particular due to distress in the banking sector and the presence of macroeconomic imbalances.

On 12 April 2013 the Eurogroup welcomed the staff-level agreement on the policy conditionality underlying the macroeconomic adjustment programme. It also noted that the Cypriot authorities had implemented decisive bank resolution, restructuring and recapitalisation measures to address the fragile and unique situation of Cyprus' financial sector.

On 25 April 2013 the Council adopted a decision addressed to Cyprus on specific measures to restore financial stability and sustainable growth. Under this decision, Cyprus will rigorously implement a macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at helping to put the Cypriot economy back on the path of sustainable growth and fiscal and financial stability.

The programme will address the specific risks emanating from Cyprus for the financial stability of the euro area and will aim at rapidly re-establishing a sound and sustainable economic and financial situation in Cyprus and restoring its capacity to finance itself fully on the international financial markets. The key objectives of the programme are: to restore the soundness of the Cypriot banking sector; to continue the ongoing process of fiscal consolidation; and to implement structural reforms to support competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003717/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Praxis der europäischen Bürgerinitiative

Das Konzept der europäischen Bürgerinitiativen (EBI) als Instrument zu dem Zweck die europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger aktiv an der Politik beteiligen zu können, war jedenfalls ein Schritt in die richtige Richtung. Allerdings werden die bürokratischen Hürden als beinahe unüberwindliches Hindernis angesehen. Die europäische Bürgerinitiative „Meine Stimme gegen Atomkraft" ist an solchen Hürden vorerst gescheitert.

1. Wie äußert sich die Kommission zu dem Vorwurf, es würden bürokratische, technische und kostenintensive Hürden aufgestellt, statt einen einfachen Zugang zu ermöglichen?

2. In Anbetracht dieser „Hürden": Hat die Kommission für das System Verbesserungen geplant? Wenn ja: In welchem Zeitraum werden sie umgesetzt?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(14. Mai 2013)

In der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 211/2011 über die Bürgerinitiative haben das Europäische Parlament und der Rat die Regeln festgelegt, die in den verschiedenen Phasen bei der Organisation einer Initiative zu beachten sind. Die Kommission hat sich an diese Regeln zu halten. Daher trifft es nicht zu, dass die Kommission für eine vorgeschlagene Initiative bürokratische Hürden errichtet. Zudem ist die Kommission weit über ihre aus der Verordnung resultierenden Verpflichtungen hinaus gegangen, um bürgerfreundliche Lösungen für die Bewältigung der Hindernisse, denen die ersten Organisatoren von geplanten Bürgerinitiativen gegenüber standen, zu finden. Unter anderem hat sie unentgeltlich ihre Server zur Beherbergung von Online-Sammelsystemen sowie ihre technische und administrative Unterstützung zur Zertifizierung der Online-Sammelsysteme der Organisatoren angeboten ([1]).

Es ist noch zu früh, um zu beurteilen, ob und in welchem Umfang der Rechtsrahmen — einschließlich der Durchführungsverordnung — geändert werden sollte. Ein Bericht über die Anwendung der Verordnung ist im Jahr 2015 vorgesehen.

Im Falle der geplanten Initiative „Meine Stimme gegen Atomkraft" ist anzumerken, dass die Registrierung von der Kommission im Einklang mit Artikel 4 Absatz 3 der Verordnung verweigert wurde, da die Bedingung gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 Buchstabe b der Verordnung nicht erfüllt war ([2]). Die Organisatoren sind natürlich berechtigt, eine überarbeitete geplante Bürgerinitiative zur Registrierung vorzulegen, die von der Kommission im Einklang mit der Verordnung insbesondere auf die Erfüllung der Bedingungen gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 geprüft würde.

([1]) Nähere Einzelheiten in der Antwort der Kommission auf Anfrage P-006759/2012.

([2]) Gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 Buchstabe b der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 211/2011 registriert die Kommission eine geplante Bürgerinitiative, „wenn die geplante Bürgerinitiative nicht offenkundig außerhalb des Rahmens [liegt], in dem die Kommission befugt ist, einen Vorschlag für einen Rechtsakt der Union vorzulegen, um die Verträge umzusetzen".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003717/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Practical experience of the European citizens' initiative

The idea of using the European citizens' initiative (ECI) to involve European citizens actively in politics was certainly a step in the right direction. However, the bureaucratic hurdles are considered almost insurmountable. The European citizens' initiative 'Meine Stimme gegen Atomkraft' ('My voice against atomic energy') has failed for the time being at such hurdles.

1. How does the Commission react to the accusation that it erects bureaucratic,technical and costly hurdles, instead of enabling easy access?

2. In view of these 'hurdles' is the Commission planning improvements to the system?If so, when will they be implemented?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

In Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative, the European Parliament and the Council established the rules to be respected at various stages in organising an initiative. The Commission is obliged to respect these rules and it is therefore not the Commission that is placing administrative hurdles in the way of any proposed initiative. Furthermore, in order to find citizen-friendly solutions to obstacles encountered by the first organisers of proposed citizens' initiatives, the Commission has acted well beyond its obligations pursuant to the regulation; amongst other things, it has offered, free of charge, its servers to host online collection systems and its technical and administrative assistance to organisers with the certification of their online collection systems ([1]).

It is still too early to assess if and to what extent the legal framework, including the implementing Regulation, should be amended. A report on the application of the regulation is due in 2015.

Concerning the specific case of the proposed initiative entitled 'My voice against nuclear power', it should be noted that its request for registration was refused by the Commission in accordance with Article 4(3) of the regulation given that it did not fulfil the condition set out in Article 4(2)(b) of the regulation ([2]). The organisers are of course entitled to submit for registration a revised proposed citizens' initiative, which the Commission would examine in conformity with the regulation, in particular to ensure that the conditions set out in Article 4(2) are fulfilled.

([1]) See the Commission's reply to Question P-006759/2012 for more details.
([2]) According to Article 4(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 211/2011, the Commission shall register a proposed citizens' initiative provided that 'the proposed citizens' initiative does not fall manifestly outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act of the Union for the purpose of implementing the Treaties'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003718/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Steueroasen — ein Mitgrund für die Verschuldung unserer Mitgliedstaaten

Große Konzerne bringen ihre Gewinne außer Landes — in sogenannte „Steueroasen"; in Europa sind dies die Niederlande, wo unzählige Konzerne Tochtergesellschaften gegründet haben, und ein gar weltweites Netz findet sich auf den Cayman Islands.

Immerhin sollen über die Niederlande 12 Billionen EUR im Jahr transferiert werden, ohne in Europa versteuert zu werden.

Das mag wohl einer von mehreren Faktoren sein, die die zunehmende Verschuldung innerhalb der EU erklären.

Davon ausgehend, dass der Kommission diese Umstände wie auch vor allem noch weitere Details bekannt sind, ergeben sich folgende Fragen mit der Bitte um detaillierte Beantwortung:

1. Was wurde nun bisher im Detail auf europäischer Ebene getan, um hier entsprechende „Schranken" zumindest auf europäischer Ebene endlich zu entwerfen und in der Folge einzufordern?

2. „Große Konzerne ‚zahlen also nicht' — daher belasten wir die Bürgerinnen und Bürger steuerlich stärker". Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission die sich für unzählige Bürgerinnen und Bürger daraus ergebende Sichtweise?

3. Betrachtet die Kommission es als „gesellschaftspolitisch" wie auch „sozial" gerechtfertigt, den Großkonzernen eine solche Möglichkeit nach dem Motto „Der Kleine zahlt — der Große spart", wie erst in einem Fernsehbericht deutlich wurde, zu geben?

4. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis über die daraus sich ergebenden Steuerbeträge, die den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten entgehen (beziehungsweise über einen EU-weiten Durchschnitt)?

5. Was gedenkt die Kommission angesichts der nach wie vor grassierenden Wirtschaftskrise in Europa unmittelbar zu tun, um europäische Steuergelder hier zu „halten" und nicht die Bürgerinnen und Bürger noch stärker als es ohnehin schon der Fall ist, zu belasten?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2013)

Die Verbesserung der Funktionsweise des Binnenmarkts war und ist auch weiterhin einer der Eckpfeiler der Politik der Kommission. Allerdings muss auch verhindert werden, dass die Steuerbemessungsgrundlagen der Mitgliedstaaten durch den Missbrauch der im Vertrag niedergelegten Freiheiten ausgehöhlt werden. Es ist richtig, dass bei Steuerpflichtigen, die vorwiegend grenzüberschreitenden Handel betreiben (multinationale Konzerne) mehr Potenzial für eine solche Aushöhlung besteht als bei Steuerpflichtigen, die ausschließlich innerhalb eines Mitgliedstaats wirtschaftlich tätig sind. Der Kommission liegen keine genauen Daten über die potenziellen Steuerausfälle einzelner Mitgliedstaaten vor, die auf die Gewinnverlagerung großer Unternehmen in der EU zurückzuführen sind. Ein solches Verhalten ist jedoch nicht hinnehmbar, da es nicht nur die Mitgliedstaaten um dringend benötigte Steuereinnahmen bringt, sondern auch die Fairness der Steuersysteme der Mitgliedstaaten untergräbt. Eine Beschränkung solcher ungewollten Auswirkungen erfordert ein gemeinsames und umfassendes Konzept. Aus diesem Grund hat die Kommission am 6. Dezember 2012 eine Mitteilung zu einem Aktionsplan zur Verstärkung der Bekämpfung von Steuerbetrug und Steuerhinterziehung ([1]) zusammen mit Empfehlungen zu aggressiver Steuerplanung und verantwortungsvollem Handeln im Steuerbereich angenommen. Der Aktionsplan umfasst 34 Maßnahmen, darunter Initiativen, die die Kommission bereits ergriffen hat, neue Initiativen, die in diesem Jahr noch vorangetrieben werden können und Initiativen, die einen längeren Zeitraum beanspruchen. Die Kommission hat betont, dass die Mitgliedstaaten diese Maßnahmen umgehend annehmen sollten.

([1]) KOM(2012)722 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003718/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Tax havens — a contributing factor to Member States' debt

Large companies send their profits abroad to a so-called tax haven. In Europe this is the Netherlands, where a large number of companies have established subsidiaries; the Cayman Islands are an international tax haven.

It is believed that at least EUR 12 billion are transferred annually via the Netherlands without being taxed in Europe.

This may be one of several factors that explain the increasing level of debt in the EU.

Assuming that the Commission is aware of this situation and, in particular, has more information, it is asked to provide detailed responses to the following questions:

1. What has Europe done to date in detail to create and subsequently enforce 'barriers' at least at European level?

2. Many citizens believe that 'large companies don't pay, so individuals have to pay more tax'. How does the Commission justify this widely-held view?

3. Does the Commission consider that giving large companies such an opportunity, on the principle that 'ordinary people pay while large concerns save', is justified from a socio-political and social wellbeing point of view, as a recent television report indicated?

4. Does the Commission know how much tax the individual Member States lose as a result (or the average for the whole EU)?

5. In view of the economic crisis that is still rampant in Europe, what immediate action does the Commission intend to take to keep European taxes here and to avoid increasing the already high burden on individuals?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Improving the functioning of the internal market has been and continues to be one of the cornerstones of Commission policies. However, the erosion of Member States' tax bases by the abuse of Treaty freedoms must be prevented. It is true that tax payers significantly engaging in cross-border trade (multinationals) have more potential for this than tax payers that are only economically active within one Member State. The Commission does not have precise data on the potential tax losses of individual Member States as a result of profit shifting of large companies in the EU. However, such behaviour is not acceptable as it not only deprives Member States of much needed tax revenues but also undermines the fairness of Member States' tax systems. Limiting such unwelcome effects requires a common and comprehensive approach, which is why the Commission adopted a communication ([1]) on an Action Plan on 6 December 2012 to fight against tax fraud and tax evasion together with Recommendations on aggressive tax planning and tax good governance. The action plan includes 34 measures: initiatives the Commission has already taken; new initiatives that can still be progressed this year; and those requiring a longer timeframe. The Commission has stressed the importance of Member States adopting these measures without delay.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003719/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υγεία και κρίση στην Ευρώπη

Η οικονομική κρίση έχει ήδη μετατραπεί σε κοινωνική, ανθρωπιστική και κρίση της απασχόλησης. Οι εκτεταμένες μειώσεις των εισοδημάτων — ως απόρροια των πολιτικών λιτότητας — η αύξηση της ανεργίας, καθώς και οι περικοπές στους κοινωνικούς προϋπολογισμούς των κρατών μελών διαμορφώνουν ένα πλαίσιο που σύμφωνα με, ολοένα και περισσότερες, μελέτες βλάπτει σοβαρά την υγεία των ευρωπαίων πολιτών. Σε χώρες που βρίσκονται υπό καθεστώς Μνημονίου, όπως η Ελλάδα, παρατηρείται αύξηση του φαινομένου των αυτοκτονιών, έξαρση των κρουσμάτων μεταδοτικών ασθενειών, ενώ τα ποσοστά κατάθλιψης — κυρίως λόγω ανεργίας ή εργασιακής ανασφάλειας — βρίσκονται σε ιδιαίτερα υψηλά επίπεδα.

Η μακροχρόνια ανεργία έχει στερήσει από ένα μεγάλο μέρος των συμπολιτών μας τη δωρεάν πρόσβαση στο δημόσιο σύστημα υγείας, ενώ η παρατηρούμενη οικονομική καχεξία συντελεί στη μείωση των επισκέψεων στο γιατρό.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Προτίθεται να προβεί στη διενέργεια μελέτης προκειμένου να εντοπιστεί η διασύνδεση της κρίσης, καθώς επίσης και των επιπτώσεων των δημοσιονομικών πολιτικών που υιοθετούνται, με την υγεία των πολιτών;

— Υπάρχουν στοιχεία σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις των δημοσιονομικών πολιτικών στην εμφάνιση ασθενειών; Αν ναι, υπάρχουν εκτιμήσεις για το πόσο έχουν επιβαρυνθεί εξαιτίας αυτού τα δημόσια συστήματα υγείας;

— Ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να λάβει προκειμένου να προστατέψει την υγεία των ευρωπαίων πολιτών, χρησιμοποιώντας και τα σχετικά ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τα δεδομένα που συγκεντρώνει η Eurostat για την υγεία και έχει αναθέσει την εξέταση των δημοσιευμένων εκθέσεων για τον αντίκτυπο της κρίσης στην υγεία, η οποία αναμένεται να ολοκληρωθεί το 2014. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή προέβη σε διάφορες διερευνητικές αποστολές στα κράτη μέλη.

Η μέτρηση του αντικτύπου της κρίσης στην υγεία είναι περίπλοκη. Υπάρχουν άμεσες επιπτώσεις, π.χ. άνθρωποι ενδέχεται να υποφέρουν από προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας, λόγω έξωσης από τα σπίτια τους. Υπάρχουν επίσης έμμεσες επιπτώσεις, π.χ. τα προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας ενδέχεται να αυξηθούν, λόγω της περιορισμένης πρόσβασης σε υγειονομική περίθαλψη. Επιπλέον, υπάρχουν καθυστερήσεις, τόσο σε ό, τι αφορά το χρονικό διάστημα που πρέπει να παρέλεθει πριν από την «επιδείνωση της υγείας» και πριν μπορέσουμε να συλλέξουμε αντίστοιχα δεδομένα για την υγεία. Αυτός είναι ο λόγος για τον οποίο, επί του παρόντος, δεν είναι δυνατόν να υπάρξουν οριστικές εκτιμήσεις ως προς το εάν και κατά πόσο τα πρόσφατα πολιτικά μέτρα είχαν αντίκτυπο στην εκδήλωση ασθενειών.

Μέσα στο πλαίσιο της σημερινής εντολής της, όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 168 της ΣΛΕΕ, η Επιτροπή θα καταβάλει κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια για να υποστηρίξει τα κράτη μέλη στις προσπάθειές τους για διατήρηση καθολικής πρόσβασης στην υγειονομική περίθαλψη και βελτίωση της ποιότητας περίθαλψης των πολιτών τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003719/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Health and the crisis in Europe

The economic crisis has already turned into a social, humanitarian and employment crisis. Extensive income cuts, due to austerity policies, rising unemployment and cuts to social budgets by the Member States are creating a situation which, according to more and more studies, is seriously damaging the health of European citizens. In countries operating under a memorandum, such as Greece, the number of suicides has risen, there have been bouts of infectious diseases and the incidence of depression, triggered mainly by unemployment or job insecurity, is extremely high.

Long-term unemployment has deprived large swathes of our populations of free access to the national health system, while the economic slump has caused a reduction in the number of visits to doctors' surgeries.

— Does it intend to carry out a study to establish a link between the crisis, the impact of the fiscal policies adopted and public health?

— Are there any data on the impact of fiscal policies on the outbreak of disease? If so, has the cost to our national health systems been estimated?

— What measures does it intend to take, using appropriate European resources, in order to protect the health of European citizens?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission monitors health data collected by Eurostat and has commissioned a review of published reports on the health impact of the crisis which is expected to be completed during 2014. In addition it has carried out a number of fact finding missions to Member States

The impact of the crisis on health is complex to measure. There are direct effects, for instance, people may suffer from mental health problems as a result of eviction from their homes. There are also indirect effects: for instance, mental health problems may increase because access to care is reduced. In addition, there are time lags, both in terms of the time that needs to pass before 'worse health' appears and before we can collect corresponding health data. This is why at present no conclusive assessment can be made of if and how recent policy measures have had an impact on the outbreak of diseases.

Within the limits of its current mandate as defined in Article 168 TFEU, the Commission will do its outmost to support Member States in their efforts to maintain universal access to healthcare and improve the quality of care delivery for their population.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003720/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατάργηση επιδόματος γάμου στην Ελλάδα

Η χορήγηση του επιδόματος γάμου συνιστά μια ουσιαστική μισθολογική στήριξη για τους έγγαμους εργαζόμενους, οι οποίοι, στην πλειοψηφία τους, έχουν περισσότερες οικονομικές υποχρεώσεις και επιβαρύνσεις από τους άγαμους συναδέλφους τους, ενώ ταυτόχρονα αποτελεί μια σημαντική και έμπρακτη ενδυνάμωση του θεσμού της οικογένειας, καθώς ο γάμος εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί το βασικό πλαίσιο για την απόκτηση τέκνων.

Στην Ελλάδα όμως, σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες εξελίξεις στο πεδίο της Συλλογικής Αυτονομίας και την επιχειρούμενη — όπως απορρέει από τα Μνημόνια δανεισμού — αποκέντρωση του Συστήματος Συλλογικών Διαπραγματεύσεων σε ατομικό επίπεδο, το επίδομα γάμου κινδυνεύει με οριστική κατάργηση, γεγονός που θα σημάνει μια ακόμη εισοδηματική απώλεια για τους έλληνες εργαζόμενους. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση, και με δεδομένους τους διακηρυγμένους στόχους της ΕΕ για τη θέσπιση πολιτικών ενίσχυσης της οικογένειας και την καταπολέμηση της υπογεννητικότητας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει συνολικά στοιχεία για τη χορήγηση επιδόματος γάμου (ή αντίστοιχου επιδόματος) στα κράτη μέλη, είτε μέσω εθνικής νομοθεσίας, είτε ως προϊόν σύναψης Συλλογικών Συμβάσεων Εργασίας;

— Πώς αξιολογεί τις επιπτώσεις μιας ενδεχόμενης κατάργησης του επιδόματος γάμου στην όξυνση του φαινομένου της υπογεννητικότητας και την ένταση της δημογραφικής γήρανσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Eurostat δημοσιεύει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τις κατώτατες αποδοχές για τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, στα οποία οι κατώτατες εθνικές αποδοχές επιβάλλονται από τη νομοθεσία, αλλά όχι σχετικά με τη χορήγηση επιδόματος γάμου (ή παρόμοιου επιδόματος) ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί τη γήρανση του πληθυσμού ως πιθανό θέμα ανησυχίας. Ακόμη, επιθυμεί να υπενθυμίσει πως η στήριξη της οικογένειας ρυθμίζεται συνήθως μέσω πολιτικών διαφορετικών από τις κατώτατες αποδοχές, για παράδειγμα σε επίπεδο κοινωνικών μεταβιβάσεων και φορολογίας εισοδήματος φυσικών προσώπων, οι οποίες λαμβάνουν υπόψη την οικογενειακή κατάσταση των ενδιαφερόμενων πολιτών σύμφωνα με τις εθνικές πρακτικές και τις δημοσιονομικές τους δυνατότητες.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/earnings/database

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003720/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Abolition of marriage allowance in Greece

The marriage allowance provides essential support in the form of extra pay to married workers, the majority of whom have more financial commitments and burdens than their unmarried counterparts. At the same time, it is an important and practical way of strengthening the institution of the family, as marriage still provides the basic framework for having children.

However, in Greece, following recent developments regarding the autonomy of the social partners (rooted in the bailout Memoranda) to decentralise the collective bargaining system to the level of the individual, the marriage allowance is in danger of being abolished definitively, which will mean a further reduction in Greek workers' incomes. In light of this and the declared aims of the EU to adopt policies to strengthen the family and combat low birth rates, will the Commission say:

— Does it have overall data on marriage (or similar) allowances granted in the Member States either under national legislation or as part of a collective agreement?

— What impact, in its opinion, would the abolition of marriage allowances have in terms of exacerbating the problem of low birth rates and ageing of the population?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

Eurostat publishes data on minimum wages for the EU Member States where there is a nationwide minimum wage enforced by law, but not on marriage (or similar) allowances granted ([1]).

The Commission regards population ageing as a matter of possible concern. The Commission would like to recall that family support is most often dealt via a number of policies different than the minimum wage, for instance at the level of social transfers and personal income taxation, which take into account the family situation of the concerned citizens according to their national practices and fiscal possibilities.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/earnings/database

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003721/13
alla Commissione
Victor Boştinaru (S&D) e Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Relazioni commerciali tra UE e Cina

Le relazioni commerciali tra l'Unione europea e la Cina vivono una fase di grande slancio. Persistono, tuttavia, un sostanziale divario in termini di importazioni ed esportazioni tra l'UE nel suo complesso e la Cina e significative differenze nei dati relativi alle importazioni ed esportazioni tra i diversi Stati membri e la Cina stessa.

Allo scopo di disporre di un quadro chiaro della situazione ad oggi, si chiede alla Commissione di fornire le seguenti informazioni:

1. la ripartizione per Stato membro degli scambi con la Cina nel 2012 (importazioni ed esportazioni);

2. le venti più importanti imprese cinesi e dell'UE nel contesto delle relazioni commerciali tra Unione europea e Cina;

3. le stesse informazioni per i primi mesi del 2013, se disponibili.

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(15 maggio 2013)

Nella tabella in allegato, inviata direttamente agli onorevoli parlamentari e al segretariato del Parlamento, è riportato il capitolato del totale delle importazioni, delle esportazioni e del saldo commerciale degli Stati membri con la Cina per gli anni 2010-2012. Si noti che si tratta di cifre preliminari, soggette a revisione in una fase successiva, soprattutto per quanto riguarda il 2012.

Allo stato attuale delle cose la banca dati COMEXT di Eurostat contiene dati commerciali riguardanti tutti e ventisette gli Stati membri fino al mese di gennaio 2013 (vedere l'allegato).

Non sono disponibili informazioni concernenti le società dell'Unione o cinesi coinvolte in questi flussi commerciali e la loro relativa importanza.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003721/13
adresată Comisiei
Victor Boştinaru (S&D) şi Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale UE-China

Relațiile dintre UE și China se află într-o fază extrem de pozitivă. Cu toate acestea, există în continuare un dezechilibru considerabil în ceea ce privește importurile/exporturile dintre UE în globalitatea sa și China, precum și diferențe semnificative la nivelul importurilor/exporturilor dintre diferitele state membre și China.

Pentru a avea o imagine clară a situației actuale, ar putea Comisia să transmită următoarele informații:

1. o defalcare pe stat membru a importurilor din China și a exporturilor spre China totale în 2012;

2. cele mai importante 20 de societăți din UE și cele mai importante 20 de societăți chineze din punct de vedre al relațiilor comerciale UE-China;

3. aceleași informații pentru primele luni ale anului 2013, dacă acestea sunt disponibile.

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(15 mai 2013)

În tabelul din anexă sunt specificate totalul importurilor și exporturilor de mărfuri ale statelor membre din/în China pentru perioada 2010-2012, precum și balanța comercială aferentă, anexa fiind transmisă direct distinșilor membri și Secretariatului Parlamentului. Ar trebui remarcat faptul că cifrele, în special cele pentru anul 2012, sunt preliminare și pot face obiectul unor revizuiri într-o etapă ulterioară.

În prezent, baza de date COMEXT a Eurostat conține date comerciale pentru toate cele 27 de state membre până în ianuarie 2013 (a se vedea anexa).

Nu deținem informații cu privire la societățile din UE sau chineze implicate în aceste fluxuri comerciale sau cu privire la importanța relativă a acestora.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003721/13
to the Commission
Victor Boştinaru (S&D) and Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: EU-China trade

Trade relations between the EU and China are experiencing a very positive momentum. However, there is still a considerable disproportion in terms of imports/exports between the EU as a whole and China, as well as significant differences in the figures for imports/exports between the different Member States and China.

In order to have a clear picture of exactly how things stand today, could the Commission please provide the following information:

1. a breakdown by Member State of total import and export exchange with China in 2012;

2. the top 20 EU companies, and the top 20 Chinese ones, in terms of EU-China trade relations;

3. the same information for the first months of 2013, if available.

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

A specification of total merchandise imports, exports and trade balance of Member States with China for the years 2010-2012 is given in the table in annex, which is sent directly to the Honourable Members and to Parliament's Secretariat. It should be noted that in particular the figures for 2012 are preliminary figures subject to revisions at a later stage.

At this point in time Eurostat's COMEXT database contains trade data for all 27 Member States up until January 2013 (see annex).

No information is available about the (relative importance of) EU or Chinese companies involved in these trade flows.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003722/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Reducerea sprijinului financiar acordat autorităților indiene

UE a subliniat în repetate rânduri că intenționează să-și continue angajamentele luate față de instituțiile și societatea civilă din India în probleme referitoare la violența împotriva femeilor.

În documentul „Drepturile omului și democrația în lume: raport privind acțiunea UE în 2011", se afirmă că „UE a oferit sprijin financiar pentru mai multe inițiative vizând o serie de preocupări în domeniul drepturilor omului, inclusiv traficul de femei și copii, prevenirea torturii (…), precum și accesul populațiilor vulnerabile la justiție".

Cu toate acestea, în ultimele luni, în India au avut loc o serie de cazuri șocante de violență împotriva femeilor. De asemenea, conform statisticilor, în perioada 2001-2011, în cazul a 3 din 4 procese de viol al unei femei, acuzații au fost fie găsiți nevinovați, fie eliberați ca urmare a lipsei probelor.

Intenționează Comisia să adopte sancțiuni împotriva autorităților din India, printre care și reducerea sprijinului financiar, dacă nu vor fi adoptate rapid măsurile adecvate pentru prevenirea și reducerea violenței împotriva femeilor? Dacă da, ar putea Comisia preciza ce sancțiuni ar putea fi aplicate în vederea reducerii sprijinului financiar?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte în numele Comisiei
(23 mai 2013)

Uniunea Europeană acordă o atenție deosebită cazurilor de violență împotriva femeilor, inclusiv celor care au survenit în ultimele luni. În luna ianuarie, un raport detaliat a fost prezentat de către comitetul prezidat de fostul președinte al Curții Supreme de Justiție, J.S. Verma, care a fost însărcinat cu analizarea modificărilor posibile ale dreptului penal în vederea introducerii unor procese mai rapide și a unor pedepse mai severe pentru infractorii care comit agresiuni sexuale împotriva femeilor. În prezent, guvernul indian are responsabilitatea de a modifica dreptul penal pe baza recomandărilor prezentate în Raportul Verma, un proces pe care UE îl va urmări îndeaproape.

În același timp, UE va continua colaborarea cu autoritățile indiene de la toate nivelurile și cu societatea civilă locală, inclusiv prin acordarea de finanțare pentru proiectele de cooperare pentru dezvoltare care pun accentul în special pe bunăstarea fetelor și a femeilor. De asemenea, drepturile femeilor și egalitatea de gen sunt înscrise permanent pe agenda dialogului privind drepturile omului, care se desfășoară în mod regulat între UE și India. Acestea sunt instrumente importante utilizate de UE pentru a susține reformele din India, în contextul parteneriatului strategic din ce în ce mai amplu dintre UE și India.

UE consideră că „sancțiunile", inclusiv reducerea ajutorului pentru dezvoltare, nu reprezintă un mijloc care ar putea reduce violența împotriva femeilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003722/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Reducing financial support to the Indian authorities

The EU has emphasised several times that it intends to continue its engagement with Indian institutions and civil society on issues concerning violence against women.

In the 'Human rights and democracy in the world — Report on EU Action in 2011', it is stated that 'the EU provided financial support for a number of initiatives on a range of human rights concerns, including trafficking of women and children, prevention of torture (…) and access to justice for vulnerable populations'.

However, in the past few months, several shocking cases of violence against women have taken place in India. Additionally, statistics show that between 2001 and 2011, in 3 out of 4 trials dealing with the rape of a woman, the perpetrators were either found not guilty or released due to lack of evidence.

Will the Commission adopt sanctions against the Indian authorities, including the reduction of financial support, if adequate measures are not rapidly taken to prevent and reduce violence against women? If yes, could the Commission specify the particular sanctions that could be taken with regard to the reduction of financial support?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The European Union has been paying great attention to the cases of violence against women, including in recent months. An extensive report was presented in January by the Committee chaired by former Chief Justice J.S. Verma, whose mandate was to look at possible amendments to the Criminal Law to provide for quicker trial and enhanced punishment for criminals committing sexual assault against women. It is now up to the Indian government to amend the Criminal Law drawing upon the recommendations of the Verma Report, a process that the EU will be following very closely.

At the same time, the EU will continue engaging with the Indian authorities at all levels and with the local civil society, including by funding development cooperation projects having a strong focus on women and girls' welfare. In addition to this, women's rights and gender issues are always on the agenda of the EU-India regular Human Rights dialogue. These are important instruments for the EU to support reforms in India, in the context of the expanding EU-India Strategic Partnership.

The EU does not believe that 'sanctions', including the reduction of development aid, are likely to reduce violence against women.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003723/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Complexitatea pieței financiare

Comisia a elaborat recent o propunere în vederea consolidării cadrului legislativ al UE pentru combaterea abuzurilor de pe piața financiară, care include Regulamentul din 2011 privind utilizările abuzive ale informațiilor privilegiate și manipulările pieței și Directiva din 2011 privind sancțiunile penale pentru utilizările abuzive ale informațiilor privilegiate și manipulările pieței.

1. Având în vedere marea complexitate tehnică a pieței financiare, consideră Comisia că ar trebui să existe regulamente separate pentru băncile comerciale și băncile de investiții pentru a se lua în considerare particularitățile diferitelor tipuri de operațiuni bancare?

2. Dacă da, cum va proceda Comisia în acest sens?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(24 mai 2013)

Propunerile Comisiei de Regulament privind utilizările abuzive ale informațiilor privilegiate și manipulările pieței și de Directivă privind sancțiunile penale pentru utilizările abuzive ale informațiilor privilegiate și manipulările pieței instituie un cadru de reglementare pentru interzicerea abuzului de piață cu privire la instrumentele financiare, ținând seama de evoluțiile pieței. Scopul acestor propuneri este de a consolida integritatea pieței, protecția investitorilor și încrederea în piață.

În ceea ce privește abuzul de piață, acest cadru introduce obligații pentru operatorii de pe piață și pentru firmele de investiții care utilizează locuri de tranzacționare, precum și pentru firmele de investiții, instituțiile de credit sau alte instituții financiare a căror activitate constă în primirea și transmiterea de ordine sau în execuția tranzacțiilor din cadrul instrumentelor financiare. Băncile comerciale și de investiții sunt incluse în acest domeniu de aplicare.

Pe plan mai larg, Comisia analizează în prezent recomandările prezentate de Grupul de lucru la nivel înalt privind reformarea structurii sectorului bancar din UE, al cărui președinte este Erkki Liikanen, guvernatorul băncii centrale a Finlandei. Grupul și-a publicat raportul la 2 octombrie 2012, recomandând, printre altele, obligativitatea separării anumitor activități de tranzacționare care prezintă riscuri ridicate de alte activități bancare. Raportul a făcut ulterior obiectul unei consultări a părților interesate. În prezent, serviciile Comisiei analizează mai în detaliu recomandările grupului de lucru la nivel înalt menționat anterior. Pe baza unei evaluări aprofundate a impactului, în a doua jumătate a anului Comisia va adopta o decizie cu privire la o posibilă măsură legislativă aferentă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003723/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Complexity of the financial market

The Commission recently made proposals to strengthen the EU's legislative framework against financial market abuses, which includes the 2011 Regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation and the 2011 Directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation.

1. Given the high technical complexity of the financial market, does the Commission believe that there should be separate regulations for commercial banks and investment banks to take account of the particularities of different types of banking operations?

2. If so, how will the Commission proceed with this approach?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission's proposals for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation and for a directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation establish a regulatory framework to prohibit market abuse in relation to financial instruments in pace with market developments. The aim of these proposals is to increase market integrity, investor protection and confidence in the market.

As regards prevention of market abuse, it introduces obligations on market operators and investments firms operating trading venues, as well as on investment firms, credit institutions or other financial institutions that are professionally engaged in the reception and transmission of orders or in the execution of transactions in financial instruments. Commercial and investment banks are included in this scope.

More generally, the Commission is considering the recommendations put forward by the High-level Expert Group (HLEG) on reforming the structure of the EU banking sector, chaired by Erkki Liikanen, Governor of the Bank of Finland. The Group published its report on 2 October 2012, recommending, among other things, the mandatory separation of certain high-risk trading activities from other banking activities. The report was then subject to a stakeholder consultation. The Commission services are currently further analysing the recommendations of the HLEG. On the basis of a thorough impact assessment, the Commission will take a decision on any possible legislative follow-up later this year.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003724/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Alocarea de fonduri UE pentru susținerea drepturilor femeilor în India

Recentele cazuri de violență împotriva femeilor în India demonstrează încă o dată că ordinea de zi a Dialogului UE — India pe tema drepturilor omului trebuie să acorde prioritate acestor grave încălcări.

În „Drepturile omului și democrația în lume — Raport privind acțiunea UE în 2011", se afirmă că „UE a sprijinit financiar o serie de inițiative referitoare la diferite îngrijorări privind drepturile omului, inclusiv traficul de femei și copii, prevenirea torturii (…) și accesul la justiție pentru populațiile vulnerabile".

Poate Comisia să prezinte o listă a acțiunilor pentru care UE a oferit asistență financiară în India în vederea prevenirii violenței împotriva femeilor?

Care este valoarea fondurilor alocate pentru aceste acțiuni din 2009, în fiecare an?

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(23 mai 2013)

Dat fiind că violența împotriva femeilor constituie un fenomen extrem de adânc înrădăcinat în India, o delimitare clară a sprijinului UE care abordează această chestiune nu este simplă.

În primul rând, este important să reamintim sprijinul bilateral acordat de UE guvernului din India în domeniul sănătății reproductive și al sănătății copiilor (reprezentând 110 milioane EUR pentru perioada 2007-2013), precum și în cel al învățământului primar (150 de milioane EUR pentru perioada 2007-2013). O stare bună de sănătate și un sistem educativ de calitate sunt condiții prealabile pentru combaterea eficace și pe termen lung a sărăciei, discriminării și, în cele din urmă, a violenței împotriva femeilor.

În al doilea rând, la un nivel intermediar, este, de asemenea, important să avem în vedere ajutorul acordat societății civile la nivelul formării profesionale și al mijloacelor de trai, sub formă de investiții ale UE în valoare de aproape 30 de milioane EUR în perioada 2009-2013, de o mare parte din această sumă beneficiind în mod direct femeile și adolescentele.

În al treilea rând, UE a acordat, de asemenea, aproximativ 17,5 milioane EUR în perioada 2009-2013 pentru 38 de proiecte locale ale organizațiilor societății civile privind aspecte precum accesul la justiție, combaterea traficului de persoane, tortura, violența împotriva copiilor și violența domestică. Unele dintre aceste proiecte vizează în principal femeile și fetele. În anexă este inclusă o defalcare a acestor 38 de proiecte pe an și pe temă.

În cele din urmă, este necesar să menționăm că în octombrie 2012 s-a lansat o cerere de propuneri deschisă adresată actorilor nestatali privind accesul la informațiile despre programele publice în districtele mai puțin dezvoltate; această cerere de propuneri, aflată în desfășurare, are drept temă transversală egalitatea de gen. De asemenea, combaterea violenței împotriva femeilor a fost introdusă în mod expres drept noua temă centrală suplimentară în propunerea Comisiei privind un instrument european reînnoit pentru democrație și drepturile omului în perioada 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003724/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Allocation of EU funds to support women's rights in India

The recent cases of violence against women in India prove yet again that the EU-India Human Rights Dialogue agenda must give priority to these serious violations.

In the 'Human rights and democracy in the world — Report on EU Action in 2011', it is stated that 'the EU provided financial support for a number of initiatives on a range of human rights concerns, including trafficking of women and children, prevention of torture (…) and access to justice for vulnerable populations'.

Can the Commission list the actions for which the EU provided financial assistance to India directed at preventing violence against women? How much funding has been allocated to these actions since 2009, broken down by year?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Violence against women being such a deep-rooted phenomenon in India, it is not straightforward to single out the EU support addressing this issue.

Firstly, it is important to recall the EU bilateral support to the government of India in the areas of reproductive and child health (EUR 110 million over the 2007-2013 period) and primary education (EUR 150 million over 2007-2013). Good health and quality education are prerequisites for any effective and long term fight against poverty, discrimination and, ultimately, violence against women.

Secondly, at an intermediate level, it is also important to keep in mind the civil society support in the domains of vocational training and livelihood, which represent nearly EUR 30 million of EU investment over the 2009 to 2013 period, a large share of it directly benefiting women and adolescent girls.

Thirdly, the EU also financed about EUR 17.5 million over the 2009-2013 period through 38 local Civil Society Organisations projects on issues like: access to justice, anti-trafficking, torture, violence against children and domestic violence. Some of these projects have women and girls as their core focus. A break up of these 38 projects per year and per theme is attached.

Finally, it is worth noting that the currently open non-state actors call for proposals launched in October 2012 on access to information of public schemes in backward districts has Gender as its cross-cutting theme. Moreover, the fight against violence against women has been specifically introduced as the new additionnal focus in the Commission proposal for a renewed European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003725/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Smart regulation on SMEs

In light of the Commission's communication on 'Smart regulation — Responding to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises', would the Commission explain how the SME Envoy should be selected and what exactly will be his/her role, given that this is one of the criteria for Member States to receive support from the European Regional Development Fund.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The national SME Envoys ([1]) represent their respective governments. Member States are, therefore, free to nominate whom they consider best placed. However, in view of the importance the Commission attaches to SMEs in general and the Small Business Act (SBA) in particular, it has asked Member States to nominate persons with the knowledge and standing corresponding to the needs of SME policy. The Commission is very pleased with the personal qualifications and the level of the nominated SME Envoys.

The SME Envoys promote SMEs' interests and contribute in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the SBA in their country. They also ensure that the 'Think Small First' principle is integrated into their policy-making and regulatory proposals.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/sme-envoy/national-sme-envoys/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003726/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: High Level Group on Administrative Burdens

The Commission recently extended the mandate of the High Level Group on Administrative Burdens. Could the Commission refer me to a report on this group's activity that justifies this mandate extension?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The High Level Group on Administrative Burdens (HLG) was set up in 2007 ([1]) to advise the Commission with regard to the Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU.

The aim of the Action Programme of cutting administrative burdens stemming from EU legislation by 25% by 2012 was reached with the support of the HLG. Measures adopted at EU level up to December 2012 represent EUR 30.8 billion in annual savings for businesses ([2]). Furthermore, the HLG published a report 'Europe can do better — Report on best practice in Member States to implement EU legislation in the least burdensome way' in February 2012. It showed that there is ample scope for additional savings for business by improving the efficiency of the implementation of EU legislation in the Member States.

Reducing administrative burden, especially for small and medium-sized businesses, remain priorities for the Commission and the mandate for the Group advising the Commission on these issues was extended to enable the Group to continue to assist in this work ([3]). The HLG is also tasked with advising on the implementation in the Member States of the measures adopted under the Action Programme.

Detailed information on the Group including all its opinions and reports is published on the HLG's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/admin_burden/ind_stakeholders/ind_stakeholders_en.htm

([1]) Commission decision of 31 August 2007 — C(2007)4063.
([2]) Cf. Annex to the Commission's Communication on EU Regulatory Fitness, COM(2012)746.
([3]) Commission decision of 5.12.2012 — C(2012) 8881 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003727/13
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Dog spinning in Bulgaria

The traditional practice of 'dog spinning' in Bulgaria recently came to my attention. To briefly summarise the practice, a dog is tied up with a wound-up rope and suspended above water and then the rope is released and the dog spins rapidly around. While this might not sound serious, the rope cuts into the armpits of the dog and it has difficulty breathing. The spin causes the dog to be disoriented and therefore, when it falls into the water, it breathes in water and in some cases drowns.

According to Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of theEuropean Union, animal welfare only falls under EU competence in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, transport, the internal market, research and technological development and space policies. Nonetheless, animal cruelty should not be condoned or permitted in the EU.

1. Is the Commission undertaking educational programmes aimed at balancing animal rights and cultural traditions in this area?

2. Does the Commission foresee any future actions to prevent these examples of animal cruelty from taking place in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the type of abuses mentioned by the Honourable Member.

At present there is no EU rule governing the protection of dogs and the Commission has no power to take particular action in this field.

However, the Commission is active in promoting and encouraging good practices on companion animal welfare and actively cooperates with other organisations to the development of the 'CARODOG' website ([1]), an informative platform on canine population management, leading to responsible animal ownership as a fundamental precondition for a dog-friendly society.

([1]) www.carodog.eu.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003729/13
au Conseil
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 avril 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire — TVA

Le gaspillage alimentaire s'aggrave d'année en année, alors que les matières premières se raréfient et que la malnutrition s'étend en Europe. 89 millions de tonnes de nourriture sont jetées chaque année (soit 179 kg/an/personne), dont la majeure partie est pourtant saine et comestible.

Alors même que des millions citoyens dépendent directement de dons alimentaires, il semble nécessaire de rechercher les causes de ce gaspillage afin de réduire ce phénomène et d'aider les plus démunis.

Parmi les raisons identifiées figure un système de TVA qui décourage les dons de la grande distribution en faveur des banques alimentaires.

En effet, un supermarché qui jette des aliments approchant de la date limite de consommation ou endommagés ne paye pas la TVA, alors que celui qui en fait don à des banques alimentaires y est assujetti, conformément à la directive nº 2006/112/CE.

Au regard de ces éléments, et sachant que la Commission a prévu de publier une nouvelle communication en 2013 sur le gaspillage alimentaire, le Conseil serait-il favorable à une révision du système TVA qui s'applique aux dons de denrées alimentaires, afin de lutter contre le gaspillage alimentaire et d'aider les plus démunis?

Réponse
(31 mai 2013)

Comme le sait l'Honorable Parlementaire, le Conseil statue sur la base d'une proposition de la Commission. À ce jour, aucune nouvelle proposition spécifique de la Commission n'a été présentée concernant le régime de TVA pour des situations particulières liées au gaspillage alimentaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003729/13
to the Council
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Combating the problem of food wastage — VAT

The problem of food wastage is growing worse every year, even as basic resources are becoming increasingly scarce and malnutrition is spreading in Europe. Eighty-nine million tonnes of food are thrown away each year (179 kg/year/person), even though most of it is perfectly safe to eat.

At a time when millions of people are dependent on food donations, surely we must think carefully about the causes of food wastage in an effort to reverse this trend and help those most in need.

One such cause often cited is a VAT system that discourages supermarkets from making donations to food banks.

In accordance with Directive 2006/112/EC, a supermarket which throws away food that is near its use-by date or damaged does not pay VAT, whereas one which donates the products concerned to a food bank does.

Given that the Commission is planning to publish a new communication on food wastage in 2013, would the Council support a revision of the VAT system as it applies to food donations, in order to combat the problem of food wastage and help those most in need?

Reply
(31 May 2013)

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Council decides on the basis of a proposal from the Commission. For the time being, no specific new Commission proposal has been tabled concerning VAT treatment in particular cases raised in relation to food wastage.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003731/13
au Conseil
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 avril 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire — DLC

Le gaspillage alimentaire s'aggrave d'année en année, alors que les matières premières se raréfient et que la malnutrition s'étend en Europe. 89 millions de tonnes de nourriture sont jetées chaque année (soit 179 kg/an/personne), dont la majeure partie est pourtant saine et comestible.

Alors même que des millions citoyens dépendent directement de dons alimentaires, il semble nécessaire de rechercher les causes de ce gaspillage afin de réduire ce phénomène et d'aider les plus démunis.

Parmi les raisons identifiées figure une législation trop stricte sur la date limite de consommation (DLC).

En effet, un supermarché n'est pas autorisé à distribuer un produit dont la DLC est dépassée. Or, les risques bactériologiques dépendent du type d'aliment. Manger des yaourts industriels périmés de quelques jours ne serait pas dangereux, car l'hygiène est bien maîtrisée tout au long de leur processus de fabrication. Au contraire, la consommation de viande avariée présente de réels risques.

Interdire le don de produits alimentaires non commercialisables, mais encore consommables apparaît comme un énorme gâchis aux yeux des citoyens européens.

Au regard de ces éléments et sachant que la Commission a prévu de publier une nouvelle communication en 2013 sur le gaspillage alimentaire, le Conseil serait-il favorable à une révision de la législation européenne sur la date limite de consommation, afin d'autoriser le don de produits alimentaires à la DLC dépassée, mais qui ne présentent pas de risques pour la santé humaine?

Réponse
(28 mai 2013)

L'utilisation de la date limite de consommation et de la date de durabilité minimale (indiquées sur les denrées alimentaires au moyen de la mention «à consommer de préférence avant le») est régie par le règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires (article 24) ([1]).

Le Conseil examinera toute proposition de modification de ce règlement que la Commission pourrait présenter à l'avenir.

([1]) JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003731/13
to the Council
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Combating the problem of food wastage — use-by dates

The problem of food wastage is growing worse every year, even as basic resources are becoming increasingly scarce and malnutrition is spreading in Europe. Eighty-nine million tonnes of food are thrown away each year (179 kg/year/person), even though most of it is perfectly safe to eat.

At a time when millions of people are dependent on food donations, surely we must think carefully about the causes of food wastage in an effort to reverse this trend and help those most in need.

Excessively strict laws on use-by dates are often cited as one such cause.

Under these laws, supermarkets are not permitted to sell products once their use-by dates have passed. The level of bacteriological risk depends on the type of food involved, however. Eating mass-produced yoghurts a few days after their use-by dates poses no risk to health, as proper hygiene is maintained throughout the production process. Eating tainted meat, on the other hand, may well be dangerous.

Banning the donation of food products that cannot be sold but are safe to eat is regarded by the public as a huge waste.

Given that the Commission is planning to publish a new communication on food wastage in 2013, would the Council support revised EU legislation on use-by dates in order to clear the way for the donation of food products which, though past their use-by dates, present no risk to health?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The use of 'use by' dates and the date of minimum durability (indicated on food as 'best before') are regulated by Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (Article 24) ([1]).

The Council will consider any proposal for amendment of that regulation which the Commission may submit in the future.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003732/13
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 avril 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire — DLC

Le gaspillage alimentaire s'aggrave d'année en année, alors que les matières premières se raréfient et que la malnutrition s'étend en Europe. 89 millions de tonnes de nourriture sont jetées chaque année (soit 179 kg/an/personne), dont la majeure partie est pourtant saine et comestible.

Alors même que des millions citoyens dépendent directement de dons alimentaires, il semble nécessaire de rechercher les causes de ce gaspillage afin de réduire ce phénomène et d'aider les plus démunis.

Parmi les raisons identifiées figure une législation trop stricte sur la date limite de consommation (DLC).

En effet, un supermarché n'est pas autorisé à distribuer un produit dont la DLC est dépassée. Or, les risques bactériologiques dépendent du type d'aliment. Manger des yaourts industriels périmés de quelques jours ne serait pas dangereux, car l'hygiène est bien maîtrisée tout au long de leur processus de fabrication. Au contraire, la consommation de viande avariée présente de réels risques.

Interdire le don de produits alimentaires non commercialisables, mais encore consommables apparaît comme un énorme gâchis aux yeux des citoyens européens.

Au regard de ces éléments et sachant que la Commission a prévu une nouvelle de publier une nouvelle communication en 2013 sur le gaspillage alimentaire, entend-elle proposer une révision de la législation européenne sur la date limite de consommation, afin d'autoriser le don de produits alimentaires à la DLC dépassée, mais qui ne présentent pas de risques pour la santé humaine?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(15 mai 2013)

La législation de l'Union ([1]) distingue deux types de dates de durabilité: «À consommer de préférence avant le» et «Date limite de consommation».

La première indique la date jusqu'à laquelle la denrée alimentaire conserve ses propriétés spécifiques dans des conditions de conservation appropriées. En conséquence, même après cette date, un aliment peut être vendu et consommé si l'exploitant du secteur alimentaire peut garantir que l'aliment répond encore à l'ensemble des prescriptions de la législation alimentaire.

La seconde est utilisée lorsque, du point de vue microbiologique, une denrée alimentaire est très périssable et qu'elle est donc susceptible, après une courte période, de présenter un danger immédiat pour la santé humaine. Le nouveau règlement concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires ([2]), qui s'appliquera à partir du 13 décembre 2014, maintient les règles existantes, mais l'article 24 prévoit en outre qu'au-delà de la date limite de consommation une denrée alimentaire doit être considérée comme dangereuse au sens de l'article 14, paragraphes 2 à 5, du règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mars 2000 relative au rapprochement des législations des États membres concernant l'étiquetage et la présentation des denrées alimentaires ainsi que la publicité faite à leur égard (JO L 109 du 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([2]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE) n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011).

([3]) Règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 28 janvier 2002 établissant les principes généraux et les prescriptions générales de la législation alimentaire, instituant l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments et fixant des procédures relatives à la sécurité des denrées alimentaires (JO L 31 du 1.2.2002, p. 1).

À ce stade, la Commission n'a pas l'intention de modifier les règles énoncées ci-dessus. Toutefois, afin d'améliorer la compréhension du marquage de la date, une fiche pratique a été rédigée; elle explique la signification des deux mentions et a été publiée et traduite dans toutes les langues de l'Union européenne ([4]).Par ailleurs, la Commission mène actuellement une étude comportementale axée, entre autres, sur la compréhension de ces marquages par le consommateur et sur le comportement adopté en conséquence par celui-ci.

Enfin, la communication sur l'alimentation durable, qui doit être adoptée d'ici à la fin de 2013, aura pour objet la prévention et la réduction du gaspillage alimentaire dans le commerce de détail.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/docs/best_before_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003732/13
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Combating the problem of food wastage — use-by dates

The problem of food wastage is growing worse every year, even as basic resources are becoming increasingly scarce and malnutrition is spreading in Europe. Eighty-nine million tonnes of food are thrown away each year (179 kg/year/person), even though most of it is perfectly safe to eat.

At a time when millions of people are dependent on food donations, surely we must think carefully about the causes of food wastage in an effort to reverse this trend and help those most in need.

Excessively strict laws on use-by dates are often cited as one such cause.

Under these laws, supermarkets are not permitted to sell products once their use-by dates have passed. The level of bacteriological risk depends on the type of food involved, however. Eating mass-produced yoghurts a few days after their use-by dates poses no risk to health, as proper hygiene is maintained throughout the production process. Eating tainted meat, on the other hand, may well be dangerous.

Banning the donation of food products that cannot be sold but are safe to eat is regarded by the public as a huge waste.

Given that the Commission is planning to publish a new communication on food wastage in 2013, does it intend to propose revised EU legislation on use-by dates in order to clear the way for the donation of food products which, though past their use-by dates, present no risk to health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Union legislation ([1]) differentiates two types of durability dates: 'best before date' and 'use by date'.

The 'best before' date relates to the date until which the food retains its specific properties when properly stored. Hence, even after this date, a food may still be consumed and sold, if the food business operator can assure that the food still meets all food law requirements.

The 'use by' date is used when, from a microbiological point of view, a food is highly perishable and is therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health. The new Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), which will apply from 13 December 2014, maintains the existing rules. Moreover, Article 24 states that after the 'use by' date a food shall be deemed to be unsafe in accordance with Article 14(2) to (5) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([3]).

At this stage the Commission does not intend to change the abovementioned rules. However, in order to improve the understanding of the date marking, a practical sheet clarifying the meaning of 'best before' and 'use by' dates has been prepared. The abovementioned document has been published and translated into all EU languages ([4]). In addition, consumers' understanding and purchasing behaviour in relation to these dates is part of the subject of a behavioural study currently conducted by the Commission.

Finally, the communication on Sustainable Food — due for adoption by the end of 2013 — will address the issue of food waste prevention and reduction in detail.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs (OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p.29).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31 of 1.2.2002.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/docs/best_before_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003733/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(3 avril 2013)

Objet: Une réelle politique européenne pour la navigation intérieure

Dans son Livre blanc de 2001 intitulé «La politique européenne des transports à l'horizon de 2010: l'heure des choix», la Commission européenne mettait déjà en évidence que le transport fluvial pouvait être mieux exploité. Il s'agissait en effet d'un mode de transport de marchandises fiable, économique, peu polluant et peu bruyant, qui pouvait constituer une alternative compétitive aux transports routiers.

Puis, dans une communication du 17 janvier 2006 sur la promotion du transport par voies navigables «Naïades»: «Un programme d'action européen intégré sur le transport par voies navigables», la Commission préconisait une politique européenne globale du transport par voies navigables autour de cinq points majeurs: 1) étendre les services de navigation intérieure à de nouveaux marchés en croissance par l'amélioration de l'accès au capital au moyen d'incitations fiscales, 2) une indispensable modernisation et innovation dans le secteur, 3) une amélioration des conditions socioprofessionnelles et une reconnaissance mutuelle des qualifications dans toute l'Union européenne, 4) l'élimination des goulets d'étranglement.

Enfin, dans son Livre blanc de 2011 intitulé «Feuille de route pour un espace européen unique des transports — Vers un système de transport compétitif et économe en ressources», la Commission estimait que le transport par voies navigables pouvait contribuer à la durabilité du système de transport, puisqu'il constituait le mode de transport terrestre le plus respectueux de l'environnement.

Bien que la Commission ait adopté quelques directives concernant le transport fluvial, il n'en reste pas moins qu'aucune véritable politique européenne à ce sujet n'a, à ce jour, été engagée.

1. Les règles concernant le transport fluvial, relatives notamment aux conditions de chargement et de déchargement, aux conditions de transport et aux règles sociales, sont différentes d'un État membre à un autre. Cette situation conduit à des distorsions entre bateaux de même catégorie naviguant selon un mode d'exploitation identique mais n'ayant pas le même pavillon. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de mettre en place une réelle politique européenne des transports fluviaux, notamment en harmonisant les conditions de chargement et de déchargement, les conditions de transport ainsi que les règles sociales liées au transport fluvial?

2. Par ailleurs, contrairement à l'objectif d'un marché interne concurrentiel et compétitif, certaines entreprises ne peuvent pas respecter la règle interdisant tout transport à pertes. La Commission prévoit-elle la mise en place de mesures afin d'éviter toute forme de dumping et de promouvoir une concurrence loyale au sein de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2013)

1. La Commission procède actuellement au réexamen du programme Naiades, en cours d'exécution, en vue de l'adoption d'un nouveau plan d'action visant à promouvoir la navigation intérieure en tant que système de transport multimodal économe en énergie.

Toutefois, dans le cadre de la procédure de consultation conduite par la Commission en vue de la révision du programme Naiades, l'harmonisation, d'une part, des règles relatives aux opérations de chargement et de déchargement dans le domaine de la navigation intérieure et, d'autre part, des conditions de transport, n'est pas apparue comme une priorité. La Convention de Budapest relative au contrat de transport de marchandises en navigation intérieure (CMNI) est une convention intergouvernementale à laquelle l'UE n'est pas partie. La Commission n'entend pas proposer de mesures législatives dans ces domaines, ni prendre de mesures pour faire adhérer l'UE à la convention.

En ce qui concerne l'emploi, la Commission examine actuellement l'accord récemment conclu par les partenaires sociaux sur le temps de travail.

2. Le marché intérieur de la navigation intérieure est déjà ouvert et les instruments de la politique de la concurrence de l'UE en vigueur permettent déjà de contrer d'éventuelles pratiques déloyales et distorsions de concurrence. À cet égard, les activités de transport déficitaires ne sont pas par définition illégales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003733/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: A genuine European inland waterway transport policy

In its 2001 White Paper entitled 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide', the Commission pointed out that inland waterway transport was underused, given that it represented a reliable, economical, clean and quiet mode of goods transport which could offer a competitive alternative to road haulage.

Following on from this, in a communication dated 17 January 2006 on the promotion of 'NAIADES', an integrated European action programme for inland waterway transport, the Commission recommended a comprehensive EU transport policy, based on four major points: (1) extending inland waterway transport services to new growth markets by improving access to capital by means of fiscal incentives; (2) carrying out the process of modernisation and innovation vitally needed in the sector; (3) improving working and social conditions and guaranteeing mutual recognition of qualifications throughout the European Union; (4) eliminating bottlenecks.

Lastly, in its 2011 White Paper entitled 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a Competitive and Resource-efficient Transport System', the Commission considered that inland waterway transport could contribute to the sustainability of the transport system, given that it represented the most environmentally-friendly means of land transport.

Although the Commission has adopted a number of directives regarding inland waterway transport, there is still no genuine European policy in this area.

1. Rules governing inland waterway transport, especially those relating to loading and unloading conditions, transport conditions and employment arrangements, vary from one Member State to another. This state of affairs is giving rise to distortions of competition between vessels in the same category, which operate in the same way, but do not fly the same flag. Does the Commission intend to establish a genuine European inland waterway transport policy, for instance by harmonising loading and unloading conditions, transport conditions and employment rules applicable to inland waterway transport?

2. What is more, some companies are unable to comply with the rule prohibiting all loss-making transport activities, a state of affairs at odds with the objective of an open and competitive internal market. Does the Commission have any plans to introduce measures designed to prevent all forms of dumping and promote fair competition in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

1. The Commission is currently reviewing the ongoing NAIADES programme in view of adopting a new action plan to promote inland navigation as part of an energy efficient and multimodal transport system.

However, in the consultation process which the Commission conducted for the revision of NAIADES, harmonisation of rules on loading and unloading in the field of Inland Waterway Transport and of transport conditions have not emerged as a priority. The Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway (CMNI) is an intergovernmental convention in which the EU is not involved. The Commission doesn't have the intention to propose legislative measures in these fields nor to take steps aiming the adherance of the EU to the Convention.

As regards employment, the Commision is currently assessing the recent agreement reached by the social partners on working time.

2. The internal market of the inland navigation is already open and possible unfair practices and distorsions of competitions can already be tackled by the existing EU competition instruments. In this respect, loss-making transport activities are not by definition unlawful.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003734/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Persecuzioni contro i cristiani copti in Libia

All'inizio di febbraio, 48 commercianti egiziani copto-ortodossi sono stati arrestati a Bengasi dalle milizie armate salafite con l'accusa di diffondere immagini religiose. In 44 sono stati liberati dopo alcuni giorni di detenzione e hanno denunciato di essere stati sottoposti a torture e a tentativi di conversione.

Questo è solo l'ultimo episodio di una lunga serie di aggressioni in Libia nelle quali le vittime sono cristiani, come l'attacco da parte di milizie armate a un edificio religioso copto nella capitale della Cirenaica o l'arresto di quattro cittadini stranieri con l'accusa di vendita di Bibbie e materiale religioso.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza di questi fatti?

2. Può essa riferire in merito all'evoluzione della situazione relativamente a quanto sopra esposto?

3. Come intende agire per tutelare le minoranze cristiane presenti nel paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza di questo e altri incidenti accaduti in Libia di recente, che comportano la discriminazione di comunità religiose e limitazioni della libertà di religione o di credo. L'UE ha seguito con attenzione la detenzione di membri delle minoranze religiose (cristiani e musulmani ahmadi) accusati di proselitismo, e ha espresso la sua preoccupazione in merito in una dichiarazione rilasciata a Tripoli il 13 marzo 2013, sottolineando che la libertà di religione o di credo è un diritto umano universale che dev'essere protetto dovunque e per chiunque. Ha inoltre sollevato la questione con i ministri libici degli Affari esteri e della Giustizia.

L'UE registra peraltro un recente sviluppo positivo: il rilascio di molte delle persone che erano state arrestate in quanto sospettate di svolgere attività missionarie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003734/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Persecution of Coptic Christians in Libya

In early February 2013, 48 Egyptian Orthodox Coptic market traders were arrested in Benghazi by armed Salafist militia, accused of distributing religious images. Forty-four of them were freed after several days of detention, claiming they had been tortured and that attempts were made to convert them.

This is just the latest episode in a long series of attacks on Christians in Libya. Other examples include the attack by armed militia on a Coptic religious building in Benghazi and the arrest of four foreigners accused of selling Bibles and other religious material.

1. Is the Commission aware of these events?

2. Can the Commission report on developments in Libya in relation to the above?

3. What action does it intend to take to protect Christian minorities in Libya?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The EU is aware of this and other incidents which have taken place in Libya recently and which entail discrimination of religious communities and limitations to freedom of religion or belief.

The EU has followed closely the detention of members of religious minorities (Christians and Ahmadi Muslims) on alleged charges of proselytism. The EU expressed its concern on these cases through a statement issued in Tripoli on 13 March 2013 where it underlined that freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected everywhere and for everyone. Moreover, the EU raised this issue both with the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice.

The EU has noted the recent positive development of the release of several of the individuals who had been previously arrested on suspicion of being missionaries.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003735/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Migliaia di prodotti a base di cioccolato contenenti plastica ritirati dal mercato: rischio per la salute dei cittadini

Il 22 marzo una nota multinazionale del settore alimentare ha ritirato dai mercati di Gran Bretagna, Germania, Svizzera, Malta, Austria, Singapore, Filippine, Canada e Hong Kong migliaia di partite di cioccolato, prodotte in un'azienda sita in Bulgaria, dopo che sette consumatori in Gran Bretagna avevano rilevato nei prodotti da loro acquistati la presenza di plastica.

È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti esposti?

Considerati i recenti e ripetuti scandali alimentari che hanno costretto molti grandi gruppi alimentari a ritirare i loro prodotti dal mercato, perché non conformi agli standard di sicurezza o in qualche modo sofisticati; considerando i fatti descritti sopra e in altre interrogazioni da me presentate su tali argomenti (E-001559/2013 ed E-001557/2013), in cui la causa era imputata dalle aziende stesse ai fornitori e produttori di questi preparati, tutti situati in est Europa;

— Ravvisa la Commissione che gli standard di sicurezza utilizzati per la preparazione e lamanipolazione alimentare nelle aziende di tali paesi siano inferiori rispetto a quelli del restod'Europa?

— Intende la Commissione intensificare i controlli sugli standard di sicurezza nella preparazionealimentare industriale in questi Stati membri?

— Come intende la Commissione agire per tutelare la salute dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(15 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente dei fatti esposti dall'onorevole parlamentare.

Le prescrizioni in tema di sicurezza alimentare di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 852/2004 ([1]) si applicano in tutta l'Unione europea e sono identiche per ciascuno dei ventisette Stati membri. Il regolamento (CE) n. 852/2004 stabilisce inoltre che vada evitata qualsiasi contaminazione degli alimenti, incluse quelle causate da agenti fisici. Il produttore ha predisposto il ritiro dei prodotti in seguito a sette reclami dei consumatori.

Attraverso il Sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF) la Commissione sta monitorando la situazione e attuando uno scambio di informazioni per permettere agli Stati membri di adottare eventuali provvedimenti. Al momento non si avverte la necessità di migliorare le norme dell'Unione europea in merito a tale questione specifica.

Secondo quanto stabilito dal regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([2]) la piena applicazione delle prescrizioni e il rispetto di tali norme sono di competenza rispettivamente degli operatori del settore alimentare e degli Stati membri. L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (FVO) della direzione generale per la Salute e i consumatori della Commissione sta inoltre monitorando su base regolare i controlli eseguiti dagli Stati membri.

Al momento la Commissione non intende prendere alcun provvedimento aggiuntivo.

([1]) GU L 139 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.
([2]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003735/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Thousands of chocolate products containing plastic withdrawn from the market: risk to citizens' health

On 22 March 2013, a well-known multinational food company withdrew thousands of batches of chocolate, produced in a factory in Bulgaria, from sale in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Malta, Austria, Singapore, the Philippines, Canada and Hong Kong, after seven consumers in the UK found plastic in products they had bought.

Is the Commission aware of these events?

Given that the recent series of food scandals has obliged many large food companies to recall their products because they did not comply with food safety standards or were in some way contaminated; considering the situations described above and in other questions I have submitted on this subject (E-001559/2013 and E-001557/2013), in which the companies themselves placed the blame on the suppliers and producers of these foodstuffs, all located in eastern Europe;

— Does the Commission recognise that the safety standards for food preparation and handling used in companies in these countries are lower than those applicable in the rest of Europe?

— Does the Commission intend to step up its checks on safety standards in industrial food preparation in these Member States?

— What action does the Commission intend to take to protect the health of European citizens?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the events referred to by the Honourable Member.

The food safety requirements laid down in the regulation (EC) No 852/2004 ([1]) are applicable throughout the whole EU and are the same within the 27 EU Member States. Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 includes *inter alia* the avoidance of any contamination of food, including by physical agents. Following seven consumer complaints, the producer has undertaken a recall of the products.

Through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), the Commission is closely monitoring the situation and information is exchanged in order to allow Member States to take the appropriate actions, if needed. Currently there is no indication of a need to enhance EU rules for this specific issue.

As laid down in the regulation (EC) No178/2002 ([2]), Food Business Operators are responsible for the full application of requirements and Member States are responsible for the enforcement of these rules. In addition, the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) is monitoring on a regular basis the controls performed by Member States.

The Commission for the moment does not intend to take any additional actions.

([1]) OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003736/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Persecuzione contro le comunità cattoliche in Libia

Le milizie islamiche in Libia colpiscono le comunità religiose cattoliche presenti nel paese e che da decenni si dedicano all'assistenza delle popolazioni locali, fornendo anche cure mediche.

Nell'ottobre scorso, in seguito alle continue minacce dei gruppi estremisti, sono state costrette ad abbandonare il paese le suore del convento della Sacra Famiglia di Spoleto nella città di Derna; a gennaio di quest'anno è stato il turno delle suore Francescane del Gesù Bambino nella città di Barce e delle suore Orsoline del Sacro Cuore di Gesù nella città di Beida.

Considerando quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione rispondere alle seguenti domande:

— è a conoscenza dei fatti descritti?

— Come intende agire per tutelare la sicurezza delle missioni cristiano-cattoliche in Libia?

— Come valuta i rischi per la sicurezza dei cittadini europei cristiani presenti nel paese e quali misure intende mettere in atto per tutelarli?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

L'AR/VP non era al corrente dei fatti descritti nell'interrogazione. Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna ha pertanto trasmesso le informazioni alla delegazione dell'UE a Tripoli chiedendo ulteriori dettagli a riguardo.

Le condizioni di sicurezza in Libia restano sostanzialmente instabili, sebbene le varie regioni del paese presentino livelli di insicurezza diversi.

Secondo quanto dichiarato dall'UE a Tripoli il 13 marzo 2013, la detenzione di esponenti di minoranze religiose (cristiani e musulmani ahmadi) con accuse di presunto proselitismo costituisce motivo di preoccupazione. L'UE ha rilevato gli sviluppi positivi registrati di recente con il rilascio di molte delle persone arrestate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003736/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Persecution of Catholic communities in Libya

Islamist militias in Libya are targeting the Catholic religious communities present in the country, which have for decades dedicated themselves to helping local people and providing medical care.

Last October, following persistent threats by extremist groups, nuns from the convent of the Holy Family of Spoleto, in the city of Derna, were forced to leave the country; in January of this year, the same fate befell the Franciscan nuns of the convent of the Infant Jesus in the city of Marj and the Ursuline nuns of the convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the city of Bayda.

In view of the above, can the Commission reply to the following questions:

— Is it aware of the facts as described above?

— How does it intend to ensure the safety of Christian/Catholic missions in Libya?

— How does it assess the risks to the safety of Christian European citizens in the country, and what steps does it intend to take to protect them?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The HR/VP was not aware of the facts described above. Subsequently, the European External Action Service has forwarded the information to the EU Delegation in Tripoli asking for further details on the issue.

The security situation in Libya remains broadly fluid although the degree of insecurity varies in the different regions of the country.

The detention of members of religious minorities (Christians and Ahmadi Muslims) on alleged charges of proselytism constitutes a cause of concern as expressed by the EU through a statement issued in Tripoli on 13 March 2013. The EU has noted the recent positive development of the release of several of the individuals who had been arrested.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003737/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rapporto epidemiologico 2012

Il rapporto epidemiologico 2012 redatto dal Centro epidemiologico per la prevenzione e il controllo malattie (ECDC) esamina le principali minacce alla salute pubblica nei 27 Stati membri e in Liechtenstein, Islanda e Norvegia. Esso ha rilevato circa 64 minacce alla salute pubblica evidenziando come il 36 % di esse vengano principalmente da cibo e acque, il 31 % da malattie trasmissibile dagli animali all'uomo, l'11 % dall'influenza e il 22 % da resistenze antimicrobiche, malattie sessualmente trasmissibili e infezioni ospedaliere.

Il rapporto delinea il quadro della situazione anche in base ai paesi nei quali determinate infezioni sono più diffuse, individuandone le cause.

Considerando che tale studio evidenzia:

— che eventi epidemiologici legati al cibo (ad esempio quello riguardante l'E. coli verificatosi in Europa nel corso del 2011 per il consumo di germogli vegetali contaminati) sono causati e aggravati dall'inadeguatezza delle misure di controllo microbiologiche degli alimenti e dalla mancanza di prassi igieniche standardizzate per la manipolazione degli alimenti;

— che spesso non vi è adeguata e pronta coordinazione fra le autorità sanitarie;

Ritiene la Commissione di dover aumentare i controlli sugli standard di manipolazione degli alimenti negli Stati membri?

Come intende la Commissione aumentare la comunicazione e il coordinamento fra le autorità sanitarie sia all'interno dei singoli Stati sia fra i paesi per massimizzare l'efficienza di reazione in caso di eventuali infezioni ed epidemie al fine di tutelare al meglio i cittadini europei?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2013)

L'UE ha fissato standard elevati di sicurezza alimentare e la Commissione continua a monitorarne i progressi, ad esempio per il tramite del rapporto epidemiologico elaborato dal Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC). Buone pratiche igieniche e procedure basate sull'analisi dei rischi e dei punti critici di controllo (HACCP), compresi i criteri microbiologici, sono obbligatorie per tutti gli operatori del settore alimentare.

L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (UAV), facente capo alla Direzione generale «Salute e consumatori» della Commissione, esegue audit sui controlli dell'attuazione delle norme in tema di manipolazione degli alimenti, controlli che sono effettuati sotto la responsabilità degli Stati membri. Nei rapporti di audit si affrontano le particolari carenze riscontrate, ma attualmente non si ritiene necessaria un'intensificazione generale dei controlli.

In seguito al focolaio di «E. coli» nel 2011 la Commissione ha presentato un documento sugli «insegnamenti tratti» ([1]) in relazione ai diversi aspetti della gestione della crisi, compresi quelli legati alla comunicazione. Le procedure operative interne di intervento sono state adattate sulla base del «Piano generale» per la gestione delle crisi che interessano gli alimenti/i mangimi. Si sono avviate diverse attività per migliorare la comunicazione sui focolai di origine alimentare tra gli Stati membri e tra le autorità sanitarie e quelle preposte alla sicurezza alimentare. Tra queste attività vi erano 15 sessioni informative della durata di quattro giorni che hanno coinvolto 610 partecipanti nell'ambito dell'iniziativa «Migliorare la formazione per rendere più sicuri gli alimenti»; oggetto della formazione era la gestione transettoriale dei focolai di origine alimentare. Inoltre, nel maggio 2013, la Commissione ha previsto un esercizio di simulazione cui parteciperanno le autorità della sanità pubblica e quelle preposte alla sicurezza alimentare.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/salmonella/docs/cswd_lessons_learned_en.pdf

La Commissione ha predisposto un sistema di allarme rapido e di reazione (SARR), uno strumento volto a rendere possibile una comunicazione strutturata sulle misure volte a tutelare la salute pubblica nel caso di eventi che potrebbero avere una dimensione unionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003737/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: 2012 epidemiological report

The 2012 epidemiological report drawn up by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) looks at the main threats to public health in the 27 EU Member States and in Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway. It has identified around 64 threats to public health, showing that 36% come mainly from food- and waterborne diseases, 31% from diseases transmissible to humans from animals, 11% from influenza and 22% from antimicrobial resistance, sexually transmitted diseases and hospital infections.

The report also outlines the situation in countries where certain infections are more widespread, and identifies the causes.

The study shows that:

food-related epidemiological events (such as the E. coli outbreak in Europe in 2011 resulting from the consumption of contaminated bean sprouts) are caused, and made worse, by the inadequacy of the measures for the microbiological testing of food and by the lack of standardised hygiene practices for handling food;

there is often no proper, speedy coordination between health authorities.

In the light of the above, does the Commission take the view that checks on food handling standards in the Member States should be stepped up?

How does the Commission intend to enhance communication and coordination among health authorities both within and between states in order to provide the most effective response in the event of any infections and epidemics, so that European citizens can be given the best possible protection?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The EU has set high standards on food safety and the Commission keeps on monitoring progress e.g. by the epidemiological report made by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Good hygiene practices and procedures based on the hazards analysis and critical control points (HACCP), including microbiological criteria, are mandatory for all food business operators.

The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) audits the checks on food handling standards, which are under the responsibility of the Member States. Particular shortcomings would be addressed in the audit reports, but no need for a general stepping-up of checks is currently considered.

Following the 'E. coli' outbreak in 2011, the Commission presented a 'lessons learned' document ([1]) on the different aspects of crisis management including communication. Internal operational procedures for action were adjusted according to the 'General Plan' for food/feed crisis management. Several initiatives to improve the communication on food-borne outbreaks among Member States, and between public health and food safety authorities have been launched. They include 15 4-days training sessions for 610 participants under the Better Training for Safer Food initiative on the cross-sectorial management of food-borne outbreaks. In addition, in May 2013, a simulation exercise is scheduled by the Commission bringing together public health and food safety authorities.

The Commission has established the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS), which is a tool enabling structured communication on measures to protect public health in events with a potential EU dimension.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/salmonella/docs/cswd_lessons_learned_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003738/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Salvaguardia del popolo indigeno dei Boscimani e rispetto degli accordi sottoscritti fra Botswana e UE

Nello stato del Botswana dalla metà degli anni '90 il governo del Paese sta tentando di allontanare la popolazione indigena dei Boscimani da quella che, sia essi sia la maggior parte degli studi scientifici, identificano come la terra dei loro antenati, nella quale si trovano le loro origini storico-culturali: il «Central Kalahari Game Reserve», attualmente parco naturale. Nel 1997 il governo aveva allontanato forzatamente la metà della popolazione dei Boscimani, e nel 2005 rimanevano all'interno del parco solo 250 persone appartenenti a questo popolo. Nel 2006 la Corte suprema del Botswana si è espressa in favore di questa popolazione, concedendo ai suoi appartenenti il diritto di far ritorno nel «Central Kalahari Game Reserve».

Il governo del Paese tuttavia ha continuato ad ostacolare il rientro dei Boscimani su questa terra, da un lato imponendo regolamenti che prevedono la permanenza massima di un mese all'interno del parco naturale, pena l'arresto, dall'altro vietando alla popolazione le attività tradizionali di sostentamento come la caccia — tutto questo in violazione della sentenza della Corte suprema nazionale.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questi fatti?

Considerando che il «Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme» sottoscritto il 9 dicembre 2007 fra il governo del Botswana e la Commissione prevede un budget di aiuti di oltre 80 milioni di euro, e che nel documento si fa espressa menzione della tutela dei diritti umani e della necessità che detto Paese valorizzi e preservi l'identità culturale della popolazione dei Boscimani, la Commissione:

— ritiene che gli atti tuttora portati avanti nei confronti dei Boscimani rappresentino una violazione dei diritti umani?

— come intende agire per far sì che il governo locale tuteli questa popolazione?

— quale importo è stato effettivamente stanziato, rispetto a quello previsto nel «Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme», in favore dello Stato del Botswana?

— come intende agire per far rispettare gli accordi sottoscritti nel 2007, che prevedono appunto il rispetto dei diritti umani e la salvaguardia della popolazione indigena dei Boscimani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

L'UE è consapevole della situazione dei boscimani, o basarwa, del Botswana e delle difficoltà connesse a queste comunità, visto che, per legge, non è consentito costruire strutture permanenti per servizi pubblici nell'area del Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). Inoltre, il mancato rilascio di permessi di caccia e di accesso complica notevolmente la vita dei circa 600 basarwa che ancora vivono nella zona del CKGR.

L'UE monitora da vicino la situazione e affronta periodicamente la questione in un dialogo aperto con il governo del Botswana. Anche se il governo nazionale è restio a operare una differenziazione fra le popolazioni del paese in base al principio «tutti noi siamo il Botswana», l'UE continuerà a esprimere il proprio sostegno a favore della protezione dei diritti delle popolazioni indigene.

Per quanto riguarda l'area del CKGR, l'UE incoraggia il Botswana a garantire l'applicazione delle sentenze dei tribunali e accoglie con favore il dialogo fra il governo e i basarwa, dialogo che è disposta ad agevolare per assicurare una soluzione durevole. L'UE approva altresì le misure di sostegno recentemente adottate dal governo, quali il reclutamento preferenziale di basarwa nelle forze di polizia e nelle forze armate e la distribuzione di appezzamenti di terreno agli abitanti basarwa a Serowe.

L'UE coopera inoltre con la società civile in relazione a tale problematica. Mette a disposizione finanziamenti a titolo dello Strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani, per sviluppare le capacità delle organizzazioni locali che partecipano alla tutela dei diritti delle popolazioni indigene. Anche gli stanziamenti del Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES) sono stati utilizzati per assistere le comunità basarwa.

Finora è stato assegnato l'86 % circa del totale dei fondi inizialmente stanziati nel programma indicativo nazionale relativo al 10° FES (77,3 milioni di euro), che, dopo aumenti intermedi e mediante gli strumenti MDGi e FLEX, sono arrivati a 133 milioni di euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003738/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Safeguards for the indigenous Bushmen people and compliance with the agreements entered into between Botswana and the EU

Since the mid-1990s the government of Botswana has been trying to move the indigenous Bushmen people away from the area that they, as well as most scientific studies, consider to be their ancestral land, in which their historic and cultural origins are to be found: the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, currently a national park. In 1997 the government forced out half of the Bushmen population, and in 2005 only 250 ethnic Bushmen were living in the reserve. In 2006 Botswana's High Court ruled in favour of the Bushmen, granting them the right to return to the Central Kalahari Game Reserve.

However, the government of Botswana has continued to block the Bushmen's return to the area, on the one hand imposing regulations providing for a maximum stay of one month within the national park (with anyone overstaying this period facing arrest), and on the other hand prohibiting the Bushmen from carrying out their traditional subsistence activities, such as hunting. All this is in breach of the decision of the Botswana High Court.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

The Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme agreed between the government of Botswana and the Commission on 9 December 2007 provides for an aid budget of over EUR 80 million. The document makes explicit reference to safeguarding human rights and to the need for Botswana to uphold and preserve the cultural identity of the Bushmen. In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

— whether it considers that the acts still being perpetrated against the Bushmen amount to an infringement of human rights?

— what action it intends to take to ensure that the local government protects the Bushmen?

— what amount of funding has actually been allocated to the state of Botswana, compared with the amount earmarked in the Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme?

— what action it intends to take to ensure compliance with the agreements entered into in 2007, which provided specifically that human rights would be respected and the indigenous Bushmen people would be protected?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The EU is well aware of the issue of the Botswana Bushmen, or Basarwa, and the difficulties that addressing such communities entails, given that, by law, no permanent structures for public services can be erected in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). Moreover, the non-issuance of hunting licences and entry permits render life very difficult for the remaining circa 600 Basarwa in the CKGR.

The EU is closely monitoring the situation and is regularly addressing the issue in an open dialogue with the Government. While the Government is reluctant to differentiate regarding its populations and favours a 'we are all Batswana' approach, the EU will continue to express support to the protection of rights of indigenous groups.

Regarding the GKCR matter, the EU encourages Botswana to ensure that relevant court judgments are implemented and welcomes dialogue between government and the Basarwa, for which it is ready to facilitate, in order to ensure a sustainable solution. At the same time, the EU acknowledges the Government's recent support measures such as preferential recruitment of Basarwa into police and armed forces and the provision of plots to Basarwa squatters in Serowe.

The EU is also interacting with Civil Society in relation to this issue. EU funding is available under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, with the possibility of capacity-building of local organisations involved in rights of indigenous groups. Also EDF funds have been used to support Basarwa communities.

Regarding the *total* funds initially earmarked in the 10th EDF National Indicative Programme (EUR 77.3 million), which after mid-term increases and through MDGi and FLEX instruments reached EUR 133 million, around 86% has currently been allocated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003739/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sequestrate migliaia di lampadine recanti il falso marchio «Made in Italy»: maggiore tutela delle imprese italiane

Il 25 marzo è stata posta sotto sequestro dai funzionari delle Dogane di Milano una partita di 29 mila lampadine di produzione cinese sulle quali era apposto il marchio «Made in Italy».

La Commissione:

— è a conoscenza di questo fatto?

— ha notizia di sequestri simili avvenuti in altri Stati membri?

— come intende tutelare il «Made in Italy» e sostenere le imprese italiane ed europee, soprattutto in questo momento di crisi economica protratta, nei confronti della politica di export adottata ormai da anni dalla Cina?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di un quadro completo dei sequestri di prodotti originari di paesi terzi effettuati dalle autorità doganali degli Stati membri a motivo di un marchio d'origine fuorviante.

Nei casi come quello cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata, in cui prodotti fabbricati esclusivamente in Cina recano il marchio «Made in Italy», si applica il diritto derivato dell'UE sulle pratiche commerciali sleali. La direttiva 2005/29/CE ([1]) prevede in effetti che i commercianti operino conformemente agli obblighi di diligenza professionale e non traggano in inganno i consumatori in relazione a tutta una serie di elementi, tra cui le caratteristiche principali del prodotto offerto in vendita come la sua origine geografica.

Per meglio proteggere i consumatori, il 13 febbraio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di regolamento sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo ([2]) che prevede l'obbligo dell'indicazione di origine di certi prodotti non alimentari ottenuti mediante un processo di fabbricazione, e ciò vale sia per i prodotti fabbricati nell'UE che per quelli importati.

([1]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2005, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori nel mercato interno.

([2]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo e che abroga la direttiva 87/357/CEE del Consiglio e la direttiva 2001/95/CE, COM(2013)78 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003739/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Seizure of thousands of lightbulbs carrying a counterfeit 'Made in Italy' mark: greater protection for Italian companies

On 25 March, Customs officers in Milan seized a batch of 29 000 Chinese-made lightbulbs marked 'Made in Italy'.

Is the Commission aware of this?

Does it have information on similar seizures in other Member States?

How does it intend to protect 'Made in Italy' production and support Italian and European companies, especially at this time of protracted economic crisis, against the exports policy which has been adopted for years now by China?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission does not have a complete overview of seizures of products originating in third countries carried out by Member States' Customs Authorities on grounds of misleading origin marking.

In cases like the one referred to by the Honourable Member, where products exclusively made in China are marked 'Made in Italy', EU secondary legislation on unfair commercial practices shall apply. Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) indeed provides that traders should act in accordance with professional diligence and should not mislead consumers on a wide range of elements, including the main characteristics of the product offered for sale, such as its geographical origin.

With a view to protect better the consumer, on 13 February 2013 the Commission adopted a legislative proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety ([2]) encompassing a mandatory indication of origin of certain manufactured non-food products intended for consumers, for both products manufactured in the EU and imported ones.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on consumer products safety and repealing Council Directive 87/357/EEC and Directive 2001/95/EC, COM(2013) 78/2.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003740/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sequestro in Italia di prodotti cosmetici «Made in China» non conformi alle normative europee

Il 16 marzo, in un'operazione della Guardia di Finanza in provincia di Bari in Italia, sono stati sequestrati circa 1.500.000 articoli provenienti dalla Cina considerati pericolosi per la salute dei consumatori. Fra i prodotti posti sotto sequestro vi sono moltissimi cosmetici, colle e solventi utilizzati nella cosmesi che, proprio per la loro applicazione a diretto contatto cutaneo, risultano ancora più nocivi per la salute. Tutti i prodotti sequestrati non rispettavano le normative comunitarie e, in molti casi, recavano etichette contraffatte.

Ciò premesso, è la Commissione a conoscenza di quanto sopra esposto?

Ha notizia di casi simili negli Stati membri?

Può fornire una stima del giro d'affari generato in Europa dalla vendita illegale di questi prodotti contraffatti e non, provenienti dalla Cina, e di conseguenza stimare il danno provocato all'economia degli Stati membri?

In che modo intende agire per intensificare l'efficacia dei controlli alle frontiere europee?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(24 maggio 2013)

Ogni anno la Commissione pubblica una relazione in cui fornisce un quadro completo dei sequestri di prodotti contraffatti provenienti da paesi terzi effettuati dalle autorità doganali degli Stati membri. La Commissione non dispone però di un analogo quadro completo dei sequestri di prodotti avvenuti per altro motivo.

Le procedure per il controllo dei prodotti che entrano sul territorio dell'UE sono specificate nel regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 ([1]). Le autorità nazionali, se lo ritengono necessario e proporzionato, possono proibire l'immissione sul mercato di certi prodotti e possono anche distruggere o rendere inutilizzabili i prodotti che presentino un grave rischio.

Il sistema RAPEX ([2]) consente alle autorità, comprese quelle doganali, di scambiare informazioni sulle misure adottate.

Per meglio proteggere i consumatori, il 13 febbraio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta legislativa di regolamento sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo che riguarda sia i prodotti fabbricati nell'UE che quelli importati.

Una delle priorità dell'imminente nuovo ciclo programmatico dell'UE 2013-2017 per contrastare la criminalità organizzata e le forme gravi di criminalità internazionale riguarderà la problematica dei prodotti contraffatti, in particolare di quelli nocivi per la salute e la sicurezza.

Con la Cina la Commissione continua ad adoperarsi per risolvere i problemi bilaterali in tema di diritti di proprietà intellettuale (DPI) sia a livello tecnico che politico. In particolare, essa ha instaurato a partire dal 2004 una cooperazione nell'ambito del «IP Dialogue» (Dialogo sulla proprietà intellettuale) e del «IP Working Group» (Gruppo di lavoro sulla proprietà intellettuale). In questi contesti la Commissione coopera attivamente con i legislatori e le autorità giudiziarie cinesi per migliorare la normativa DPI.

La Commissione sta inoltre negoziando un'estensione del suo Piano d'azione bilaterale in tema di cooperazione doganale UE-Cina sulle tematiche DPI.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 765/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 luglio 2008, che pone norme in materia di accreditamento e vigilanza del mercato per quanto riguarda la commercializzazione dei prodotti e che abroga il regolamento (CEE) n. 339/93. .

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003740/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Seizure in Italy of cosmetics 'Made in China' which do not comply with European standards

On 16 March, in the course of an operation by the *Guardia di Finanza* in the Province of Bari in Italy, some 1 500 000 articles originating in China, which were judged to present a danger to consumer health, were seized. Among the products seized were a great many cosmetics, adhesives and solvents used in cosmetic procedures which, because they are applied directly to the skin, are even more harmful to health. None of the products seized complied with Community standards and many carried counterfeit labels.

Is the Commission aware of this?

Does it have information on similar cases in the Member States?

Is the Commission in a position to give an estimate of the turnover generated in Europe from the illegal sale of these products, counterfeit or not, originating in China, and consequently to estimate the damage caused to the economy of the Member States?

What action does it intend to take to enhance the effectiveness of controls at Europe's borders?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

Every year the Commission publishes a report providing a complete overview of seizures of counterfeit products originating in third countries carried out by Member States Customs Authorities. However, the Commission does not have a similar complete overview of seizures of products on other grounds.

The procedures for the controls of products entering the EU are set out in Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 ([1]). National authorities, where they deem it necessary and proportionate, can prohibit certain products from being placed on the market and can also destroy or otherwise render inoperable products presenting a serious risk.

The RAPEX ([2]) system allows the authorities, including Customs, to exchange information about adopted measures.

With a view to better protect the consumer, on 13 February 2013 the Commission adopted a legislative proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety for both products manufactured in the EU and imported ones.

One of the priorities of the upcoming new EU policy cycle 2013-2017 for organised and serious international crime will concern the tackling of counterfeit goods, notably those harmful to health and safety.

With China, the Commission is also pursuing the resolution of bilateral Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues, both at technical and political level. In particular it has established since 2004 cooperation through an 'IP Dialogue' and an 'IP Working Group'. In these frameworks, the Commission actively cooperates with Chinese lawmakers and judicial authorities to improve IPR laws.

Finally, the Commission is currently negotiating an extension of its bilateral Action Plan concerning EU -China customs cooperation on IPR.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93 .

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003741/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Autorizzazione di nuovi impianti inquinanti in una zona che già presenta inquinamento dell'aria e del suolo

Nel giugno 2012, la Regione Veneto ha autorizzato ([1]) a Pederobba, comune della provincia di Treviso, due cogeneratori a biomasse, uno alimentato a oli vegetali da 999 kW di potenza e uno a legno e tralci di vite da 490 kW, nonostante nella zona siano già presenti numerose aziende di stampaggio plastica e un'industria insalubre di classe 1 (cementificio/co-inceneritore) autorizzata a bruciare 60.000 tonnellate di petcoke e 60.000 tonnellate di pneumatici triturati annui, impianti che già immettono in atmosfera ingenti quantità di prodotti della combustione.

L'autorizzazione all'installazione dei due nuovi impianti è avvenuta senza considerare l'inquinamento di aria e suolo già presente nel territorio, rilevato da uno studio dell'ARPAV ([2]) tra il 2008 e il 2010 ([3]): i valori di IPA (idrocarburi policiclici aromatici) cancerogeni e interferenti endocrini sono risultati i più alti del Veneto.

Trattandosi di impianti con una potenza inferiore ad 1 MW, la normativa italiana ([4]) non prevede nessuna valutazione d'impatto ambientale (VIA).

In questo grave contesto di inquinamento va ricordato che il 19 dicembre 2012 l'Italia è stata condannata dalla Corte di giustizia europea per violazione della direttiva Aria (causa c 68/11), a seguito dei superamenti dei limiti di legge di più inquinanti, superamenti che tra l'altro continuano a verificarsi in quest'area in maniera costante (si vedano le interrogazioni dello scrivente n. E-007561/2012 del 6.8.2012, n. E-007660/2012 del 23.8.2012 e n. E-002024/2013 del 25.2.2013).

Ciò premesso, ha la Commissione effettuato delle indagini relative alle possibili incidenze sulla salute umana causate dalla messa in funzione di nuovi impianti di questo tipo in un contesto di grave inquinamento dell'aria e costante violazione della direttiva Aria?

Quali interventi e iniziative potrebbe intraprendere la Commissione per porre rimedio a questa situazione di rischio sanitario, considerato che nella Regione Veneto vengono autorizzati decine e decine di questi impianti?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2013)

1. Nell'autorizzare nuovi impianti di combustione, le autorità competenti in Italia dovrebbero prendere nella dovuta considerazione l'impatto sulla qualità dell'aria e imporre tutte le opportune misure di attenuazione, in particolar modo se l'installazione degli impianti è autorizzata in aree che già superano i valori limite fissati per la protezione della salute umana dalla direttiva 2008/50/CE ([5]). È il caso della zona citata dall'onorevole parlamentare, come indicato nella sentenza della Corte di giustizia del 19 dicembre 2012 ([6]) per il particolato e confermato dall'ultima relazione sulla qualità dell'aria presentata alla Commissione con riferimento al particolato e al biossido di azoto.

2. I dati dimostrano in modo sempre più evidente che la combustione del legno contribuisce ad aumentare i livelli di particolato (PM) presente in atmosfera. Il controllo di tali emissioni è uno degli aspetti valutati durante il riesame della strategia tematica sull'inquinamento atmosferico ([7]).

([1]) Delibere della Giunta Regionale n. 2073 dell'11.10.2012 ditta «Laser Industries s.r.l.», n.1371 del 17.7.2012 e n. 2029 dell'8.10.2012 «società agricola Gasrom S.r.l.».
([2]) Agenzia regionale per la Prevenzione e Protezione ambientale Veneto.
([3]) Cfr.: http://www.arpa.veneto.it/arpav/chi-e-arpav/file-e-allegati/dap-treviso/cementi-rossi/comparto-industriale-del-cemento-e-impatti-sull-ambiente.
([4]) Decreto Legislativo 3.04.2006 n. 152, parte II, allegato IV, comma 2, punto a.
([5]) GU L 152 dell'11 giugno 2008, pag. 1.
([6]) Causa C-68/11, Commissione/Italia.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm

3. In seguito alla sentenza della Corte di giustizia nella causa C-68/11, la Commissione ha avviato l'adozione di ulteriori misure per far sì che le autorità italiane pongano fine alla persistente violazione degli articoli 13 e 23 della direttiva 2008/50/CE. Per ulteriori informazioni, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare al comunicato stampa disponibile all'indirizzo: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003741/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of new polluting plants in an area which already has air and soil pollution

In June 2012 the Veneto Region authorised ([1]) the building, in Pederobba (Treviso province), of two biomass cogeneration plants, one fuelled by vegetable oils with 999 kW of power and the other fuelled by wood and vines with 490 kW, despite the fact that the area already has numerous plastic moulding firms and an unhealthy Class 1 industry (cement works/co-incineration) that is allowed to burn 60 000 tonnes of petcoke and 60 000 tons of shredded tyres per year, and that these plants already emit large quantities of combustion products into the atmosphere.

The authorisation to install the two new plants was given without considering the air and soil pollution that is already present locally, as detected by a study carried out by ARPAV ([2]) between 2008 and 2010 ([3]), according to which the values of PAH (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), which are carcinogenic and endocrine disruptors, were the highest in the Veneto Region.

Since these plants have a capacity of less than 1 MW, Italian legislation ([4]) does not make provision for any environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Against this background of serious pollution, it is worth remembering that on 19 December 2012 Italy was condemned by the European Court of Justice for having breached the Air Directive (Case C-68/11), as a result of exceeding the legal limits for a number of polluting substances; this, moreover, is continuing to happen in this area with no sign of it stopping (see Written Questions E-007561/2012 of 6.8.2012, E-007660/2012 of 23.8.2012 and E-002024/2013 of 25.2.2013).

That said, has the Commission carried out any investigations as to the possible impact on human health caused by the commissioning of new plants of this kind in an environment where there is serious air pollution and an ongoing breach of the Air Directive?

What action and measures could the Commission take to remedy this situation where health is being put at risk, given that in the Veneto Region dozens and dozens of these plants are being authorised?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

1. When authorising new combustion plants, the competent authorities in Italy should take into due account their impact on air quality and impose all appropriate mitigation measures, in particular where the new plants are authorised in a zone which is already exceeding the limit values laid down for the protection of human health by Directive 2008/50/EC ([5]). This is the case of the air quality zone mentioned by the Honourable Member, as indicated in the Court ruling of 19 December 2012 ([6]) for particulate matter and confirmed by the latest air quality report communicated to the Commission as regards particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide.

2. There is increasing evidence that wood burning contributes to the levels of particulate matter (PM) in the atmosphere. The control of such emissions is one of the aspects being evaluated during the review of the thematic strategy of air pollution ([7]).

([1]) Regional Council resolutions No 2073 of 11.10.2012, concerning the company Laser Industries s.r.l, No 1371 of 17.7.2012 and No 2029 of 8.10.2012 concerning the Gasrom s.r.l. agricultural holding.
([2]) ARPAV: Regional Agency for Environmental Prevention and Protection, Veneto.
([3]) See http://www.arpa.veneto.it/arpav/chi-e-arpav/file-e-allegati/dap-treviso/cementi-rossi/comparto-industriale-del-cemento-e-impatti-sull-ambiente
([4]) Legislative Decree No 152 of 3.04.2006, Part II, Annex IV, paragraph 2(a).
([5]) OJ L152, 11.6.2008, p. 1.
([6]) Case C-68/11, *Commission* v *Italy*.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm

3. Following the Court ruling in Case C-68/11, the Commission is taking further action to ensure that the Italian authorities put an end to the persistent breach of Articles 13 and 23 of Directive 2008/50/EC in Italy. For more information, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its press release: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-47_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003742/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(3 april 2013)

Betreft: Ontgassen binnenvaart in Natura 2000-gebieden

Veel Natura 2000-gebieden liggen in gebieden die grenzen aan rivieren. In sommige Natura 2000-gebieden zijn de rivieren zelf onderdeel van het gebied. Veel rivieren worden druk bevaren door vrachtschepen, die soms brandstoffen en chemische stoffen vervoeren. Voor het vervoeren van gevaarlijke stoffen bestaan internationale en Europese regels, zoals de „ADN" (the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways). Deze regels staan het bijvoorbeeld toe dat sommige gevaarlijke stoffen ontgast mogen worden tijdens de vaart. Dit ontgassen heeft een impact op de omgeving waar dit gebeurt, waaronder ook Natura 2000-gebieden.

Bij beheerplannen van Natura 2000-gebieden speelt vaak de achtergronddepositie van stikstof een belangrijke rol. Deze achtergronddepositie bepaalt soms mede of er ruimte is voor verdere economische activiteiten in en/of rondom het Natura 2000-gebied. Het ontgassen van gevaarlijke stoffen van vrachtschepen kan bijdragen aan een depositiewaarde die zo hoog komt te liggen dat voor een bepaald gebied geen verdere economische activiteiten mogelijk zijn. Dit heeft met name gevolgen voor andere ondernemers die in de betreffende Natura 2000-gebieden werkzaam zijn. Voor het vrachtvervoer op de binnenwateren (de veroorzakers van de depositie) heeft dit echter geen gevolgen, zij mogen op basis van de ADN regels blijven ontgassen.

1. Heeft een hogere achtergronddepositie in een Natura 2000 invloed op het al dan niet mogen ontgassen door vrachtschepen bij dergelijke gebieden?

2. Zijn lidstaten op basis van EU-regelgeving gehouden het aantal schepen, en hoe vaak en wat deze schepen ontgassen, te registreren?

3. Is de Commissie bekend met problemen in lidstaten voor wat betreft de toepassing van de ADN en de regels omtrent Natura 2000-gebieden?

4. In hoeverre zijn regels voor de binnenvaart beïnvloed door beperkingen voortvloeiend uit de Vogel- en Habitatrichtlijnen?

5. Hoe gaat de Commissie om met conflicten tussen Natura 2000 en andere wetgeving (in dit geval ADN)?

6. Behoren lidstaten, wanneer de achtergronddepositie in een Natura 2000-gebied te hoog is, maatregelen te nemen met betrekking tot het vervoer en het ontgassen van gevaarlijke stoffen in dat gebied?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(13 mei 2013)

De habitatrichtlijn ([1]) verbiedt activiteiten met een significante negatieve weerslag op de instandhouding van de habitats en soorten waarvoor Natura 2000-gebieden zijn aangewezen. In geval van een dergelijke weerslag op specifieke Natura 2000-gebieden door een hoge stikstofdepositie van binnenschepen moeten de betrokken lidstaten de nodige maatregelen nemen om dit probleem aan te pakken. Tot dusver heeft de Commissie echter geen weet van specifieke Natura 2000-gebieden die te lijden hebben onder een overmatige en problematische nitraatdepositie van binnenschepen.

In 2012 heeft de Commissie een „Leidraad inzake de binnenvaart en Natura 2000" aangenomen om te verduidelijken hoe er het best voor kan worden gezorgd dat de ontwikkeling en het beheer van binnenwateren verenigbaar zijn met het milieubeleid van de EU in het algemeen en de natuurwetgeving in het bijzonder ([2]).

([1]) Richtlijn 92/43/EEG, PB L 206 van 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/IWT_BHD_Guidelines.pdf .

De Commissie heeft geen weet van problemen bij de toepassing van de Europese Overeenkomst betreffende het internationaal vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen over de binnenwateren (ADN) en mogelijke conflicten met de EU-wetgeving, waaronder de natuurbehoudswetgeving. De Commissie herinnert eraan dat de aan de ADN-overeenkomst gehechte technische voorschriften bij Richtlijn 2008/68/EG betreffende het vervoer van gevaarlijke goederen ([3]) zijn omgezet naar uniforme toepassing in de EU; de Commissie tracht ervoor te zorgen dat de voorschriften in overeenstemming met de EU-wetgeving worden ontwikkeld. De voorschriften specificeren uitdrukkelijk dat ontgassing alleen is toegestaan indien het op grond van internationale of nationale wettelijke voorschriften niet is verboden.

([3]) PB L 260 van 30.9.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003742/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Venting of gas from inland shipping in Natura 2000 areas

Many Natura 2000 areas are located in areas along rivers. In some Natura 2000 areas, the rivers themselves form part of the area. Many rivers carry heavy freight traffic and some of the vessels carry cargoes of fuels and chemicals. There are international and European rules on the carriage of dangerous substances, such as the 'ADN' (the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways). These rules permit, for example, the venting of gases from certain dangerous substances during a voyage. This venting of gas has an impact on the environment where it occurs, including in Natura 2000 areas.

In management plans for Natura 2000 areas, the background deposition of nitrogen often plays an important role. This background deposition sometimes partly determines whether there is scope for further economic activities in and/or around the Natura 2000 area. The venting of gas from dangerous substances on freight vessels can be partly responsible for deposition values so high that no further economic activities are possible in a given area. This has a particular impact on other entrepreneurs operating in the Natura 2000 areas concerned. However, it does not have any impact on freight transport by inland waterway (the polluters who cause the deposition): they are permitted to continue to vent gas under the ADN rules.

1. Does higher background deposition in a Natura 2000 area affect whether freight vessels are permitted to vent gas in such areas?

2. Are Member States required by EC law to register the number of vessels, how often they vent gas and what it is that what they degas in this way?

3. Is the Commission aware of problems in Member States with regard to the application of the ADN and the rules on Natura 2000 areas?

4. To what extent are rules on inland shipping influenced by limits arising from the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives?

5. How does the Commission deal with conflicts between Natura 2000 and other legislation (in this case ADN)?

6. If the background deposition in a Natura 2000 area is too high, should Member States take measures with regard to the transport of dangerous substances in the area and the venting of gases from them?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Habitats Directive ([1]) prohibits activities, which may have a significantly negative effect on the conservation of habitats and species for which Natura 2000 sites have been designated. If high nitrogen deposition from inland waterway vessels have such an impact on specific Natura 2000 sites, Member States concerned should take the necessary measures to address the problem. So far, however, the Commission has not been informed of any specific Natura 2000 sites suffering from excessive and problematic nitrate deposition from inland waterway vessels.

In 2012, the Commission adopted a 'Guidance document on inland waterway transport and Natura 2000' to provide clarification on how best to ensure that activities related to the development and management of inland waterways are compatible with EU environmental policy in general and nature legislation in particular. ([2])

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/IWT_BHD_Guidelines.pdf.

The Commission is not aware of any problems regarding application of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) and its potential conflicts with EU legislation including nature protection laws. The Commission reminds that the technical rules annexed to the ADN agreement are transposed into general application in the EU by Directive 2008/68/EC on the inland transport of dangerous goods ([3]) and the Commission seeks to ensure that they are developed consistently with EU legislation. The rules specify explicitly that gas-freeing is permitted only if it is not prohibited on the basis of international or domestic legal requirements.

([3]) OJ L 260, 30.9.2008.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003743/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Fundos atribuídos a empresas e deslocalizações

Na resposta à pergunta E-000882/2013 sobre a «Situação na Empresa Barbosa e Almeida Vidro», a Comissão declara que «embora não tenha conhecimento de qualquer plano de deslocalização, salienta que o objetivo do FSE não seria comprometido por essa deslocalização, visto que o financiamento se referiu a atividades de formação ligadas à qualificação profissional, que visam melhorar o potencial dos trabalhadores».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera legítimo que empresas subsidiadas ao abrigo de fundos comunitários se deslocalizem, deixando trabalhadores no desemprego?

2. Não considera que o objetivo que preside à atribuição de financiamento ao abrigo do FSE fica posto em causa quando empresas a quem foram atribuídos esses financiamentos se deslocalizam?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de maio de 2013)

Se as empresas subvencionadas pelos fundos da UE se deslocalizarem no prazo de cinco anos a contar do pagamento final ou da conclusão de uma operação, os fundos europeus relacionados com investimentos produtivos ou as infraestruturas têm de ser recuperados e reembolsados. No caso do FSE, o investimento tem por objetivo apoiar trabalhadores individuais que mantenham as suas competências e qualificações quando a entidade patronal interrompe as suas atividades ou as deslocaliza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003743/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Funds allocated to undertakings and relocations

In its reply to Question E-000882/2013 on concerns regarding the Barbosa e Almeida Vidro Company, the Commission stated that 'Although the Commission is not aware of any relocation plans, it would point out that the aim of the ESF would not be jeopardised by relocation since the funding referred to concerned training activities linked to vocational training which aim to improve the employees' potential.'

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Does the Commission consider it permissible that undertakings subsidised by Community funds relocate, leaving workers unemployed?

2. Does the Commission not consider that the aim of allocating ESP funds is jeopardised when undertakings which have received such funding relocate?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

If undertakings subsidised by Community funds relocate within 5 years of the final payment or the completion of an operation, the Community funds related to productive investments or infrastructure have to be recovered and repaid. In the case of the ESF, the investment aims at benefiting the individual employees who maintain their skills and qualifications when their employer stops his activities or relocates.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003744/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Consequências da crise na saúde e no bem-estar das populações

Segundo a revista The Lancet, a atual crise económica e financeira está a ter consequências dramáticas na saúde das populações, nomeadamente no aumento dos suicídios e de doenças infecciosas, consequências que se verificam em Países como a Grécia, Espanha e Portugal.

Partindo do exemplo de Portugal, cujas medidas de austeridade impostas pela troika (FMI, UE) e postas em prática pelo Governo da República Portuguesa se traduziram, na área da saúde, no encerramento de serviços e valências hospitalares, na eliminação ou redução dos cuidados de proximidade e consequente redução da dimensão preventiva e do acesso ao diagnóstico, na retirada de apoios ao transporte de doentes não urgentes, no aumento brutal das taxas moderadoras, medidas estas que tiveram como consequência a restrição do acesso aos serviços de saúde e ao aumento dos custos para os utentes. Tudo isto aconteceu num quadro de brutal aumento do desemprego e da perda de poder de compra da generalidade do povo português.

Face às consequências visíveis das medidas de austeridade na saúde pública, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Foi produzida qualquer avaliação do impacto das medidas de austeridade impostas pela troika, nomeadamente na área do acesso a cuidados de saúde?

2. Não considera necessário e urgente que se inverta esta situação, através do reforço do investimento na saúde pública e nos sistemas de segurança social?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

O objetivo global das reformas dos sistemas de saúde que figuram em memorandos de entendimento é manter o acesso aos cuidados de saúde, com medidas específicas que tenham por objetivo garantir ganhos de eficiência. A Comissão apoia este objetivo, tal como foi confirmado pela Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013.

Tais reformas dos sistemas de saúde têm por base compromissos assumidos pelos próprios Estados-Membros no âmbito do Memorando de Entendimento. Por conseguinte, a avaliação do respetivo impacto recai essencialmente sob a responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. A Comissão debate regularmente o impacto sobre o acesso aos cuidados de saúde das medidas aplicadas, como parte do diálogo em curso que mantém com os Estados-Membros em causa.

No âmbito do seu Pacote de Investimento Social ([1]) de 20 de fevereiro de 2013, a Comissão tomou o partido de «investir na saúde» ([2]). O documento «Investir na saúde» reafirma que a saúde é um valor em si próprio, bem como uma condição prévia para a prosperidade económica. Convida ainda os Estados-Membros, com o apoio de fundos da UE, a investir em sistemas de saúde sustentáveis, na saúde das pessoas e na redução das desigualdades na saúde.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) SWD(2013) 43 final, 20.2.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003744/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Impact of the crisis on people's health and welfare

According to the journal *The Lancet*, the current economic and financial crisis is having a dramatic impact on people's health, in particular an increase in suicides and infectious diseases, which has been happening in countries like Greece, Spain and Portugal.

Taking Portugal as an example, in the sphere of health the austerity measures imposed by the Troika (IMF and EU) and implemented by the government of the Portuguese Republic have resulted in the closure of hospital services and facilities, the elimination or reduction of local healthcare and the consequent reduction of preventive care and access to diagnosis, the withdrawal of support for the transportation of patients in cases that are not urgent and a sharp rise in patients' contributions. These measures have resulted in the restriction of access to health services and an increase in costs for users. All this has occurred in the context of an upsurge in unemployment and loss of purchasing power by the Portuguese people as a whole.

Given the visible impact of the austerity measures on public health, I ask the Commission:

1. Has any assessment of the impact of the austerity measures imposed by the Troika been carried out, in particular in the sphere of access to healthcare?

2. Does the Commission not consider it urgent to reverse this situation by increasing investment in public health and social security systems?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The overall aim of health system reforms featured in Memoranda of Understanding is to maintain access to healthcare, with specific measures focusing on ensuring efficiency gains. The Commission supports this aim as confirmed in the 2013 Annual Growth Survey.

Such health system reforms are based on commitments taken by Member States themselves within the Memorandum of understanding. Consequently, the assessment of their impact would fall primarily under the responsibility of the Member States. The Commission regularly discusses the impact on access to healthcare of the measures implemented, as part of the ongoing dialogue it holds with the Member States concerned.

Within its Social Investment Package ([1]) of 20 February 2013, the Commission made the case for 'investing in health' ([2]). The paper on 'Investing in Health' reaffirms that health is a value in itself as well as a precondition for economic prosperity. It further calls on Member States, with support from EU funds, to invest in sustainable health systems, in people's health and in reducing health inequalities.

([1]) See : http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en.
([2]) SWD(2013)43 final, 20.02.2013.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003745/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Dezvoltarea producţiei industriale în toate statele membre ale UE

Conform statisticilor Eurostat, în ianuarie 2013, comparativ cu ianuarie 2012, producţia de bunuri de folosinţă îndelungată a scăzut cu 5,5% în zona euro şi cu 4,3% în UE 27. De asemenea, producţia de energie a scăzut în aceeaşi perioadă cu 0,9% în UE 27. Patru dintre cele 27 de state membre — Germania (27,29%), Italia (12,44%), Marea Britanie (11,93%) şi Franţa (11,65%) — au realizat peste 60% din producţia industrială a UE în 2010. De asemenea, 10 state membre au realizat împreună sub 4% din producţia industrială a UE în 2010. Având în vedere că scăderea producţiei industriale înseamnă creşterea posibilă a importurilor, scăderea competitivităţii UE şi pierderea de locuri de muncă pe teritoriul UE, aş dori să întreb Comisia Europeană ce măsuri are în vedere pentru redresarea producţiei industriale a UE, pentru păstrarea competitivităţii UE şi pentru păstrarea locurilor de muncă pe teritoriul UE. Care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia le are în vedere pentru a dezvolta producţia industrială în toate statele membre ale UE şi în special în cele a căror producţie industrială reprezintă sub 1% din producţia industrială a UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(29 mai 2013)

Comisia monitorizează cu regularitate evoluţia cifrelor referitoare la schimburile comerciale şi la industrie; în fiecare lună, punem la dispoziţie observaţii privind evoluţia producţiei industriale ([1]).

În anul 2012, importurile în UE 27 de bunuri fabricate în restul lumii au fost relativ stabile, în timp ce exporturile au crescut considerabil începând cu 2011. Evoluţia pe termen scurt a importurilor nu poate fi asociată cu evoluţia lunară a producţiei. În prezent, importurile şi producţia industrială depind, în mare, de nivelul scăzut al cererii agregate din UE. Cu toate acestea, balanţa contului curent nu s-a deteriorat ca în SUA, deoarece atât importurile, cât şi exporturile din UE, în special exporturile de servicii, au crescut proporţional.

Ponderea valorii adăugate asociate producţiei din UE 27 este în scădere încă din anii 1990. Pentru a inversa această tendinţă descrescătoare pe termen lung, astfel încât să crească de la nivelul actual de aproximativ 16 % din PIB la 20 % în 2020, Comisia pune în aplicare o politică industrială consolidată pentru a îmbunătăţi competitivitatea şi importanţa bazei de producţie în toate statele membre. Ar trebui subliniat şi faptul că unele state membre au economii relativ mai mici, dar a căror bază industrială reprezintă deja mai mult de 20 % din PIB.

Versiunea actualizată a politicii industriale ([2]) propune să se concentreze investiţiile şi inovarea, în vederea unei acţiuni imediate, pe 6 linii de acţiune prioritare ([3]). Această nouă strategie privind politica industrială propune un parteneriat între UE, statele membre şi industrie, pentru a oferi Europei un avantaj concurenţial în noua revoluţie industrială şi un nou impuls pentru crearea de locuri de muncă.

Comisia va prezenta un raport privind punerea în aplicare a acestei politici în luna septembrie a acestui an.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/index_en.htm

([2]) Comunicarea „O industrie europeană mai puternică pentru creşterea şi redresarea economiei" [COM (2012) 582 final din 10 octombrie 2012), disponibilă la adresa: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:RO:PDF
Strategia are la bază patru piloni: 1) să ofere condiţii-cadru care să stimuleze noi investiţii, să accelereze adoptarea de noi tehnologii şi să încurajeze utilizarea eficientă a resurselor; 2) să îmbunătăţească funcţionarea pieţei interne şi să deschidă pieţe internaţionale pentru a facilita redresarea; 3) să îmbunătăţească accesului la finanţare, în special pentru IMM-uri; 4) să pună în aplicare atât măsuri pentru creşterea investiţiilor în capitalul uman şi în competenţe, cât şi politici care vizează crearea de locuri de muncă.

([3]) Tehnologiile avansate de producţie, tehnologiile generice esenţiale, produsele ecologice, politica sustenabilă în domeniul industrial, construcţiile şi materiile prime durabile, vehiculele ecologice şi reţelele inteligente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003745/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Development of industrial production in all EU Member States

According to Eurostat statistics, production of durable consumer goods fell by 5.5% in the euro area and by 4.3% in the EU-27 in January 2013 compared to January 2012. During the same period, energy production fell by 0.9% in the EU-27. Four of the 27 Member States accounted for 60% of the EU's industrial production in 2010: Germany (27.9%), Italy (12.44%), Great Britain (11.93%) and France (11.65%). At the same time, 10 Member States together accounted for less than 4% of the EU's industrial production in 2010. Given that a decrease in industrial production may result in an increase in imports, a decrease in the EU's competitiveness, and job losses across the EU, will the Commission say what it intends to do to achieve a recovery in the EU's industrial production, to maintain the EU's competitiveness and preserve jobs in the EU? Will the Commission say what it intends to do to develop industrial production in all EU Member States and in particular in those where industrial production accounts for less than 1% of the EU's industrial production?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission monitors the evolution of trade and industrial figures regularly; comments on the evolution of industrial production can be found every month ([1]).

EU-27 imports of manufactured goods from the rest of the world in 2012 were roughly stable, while exports have increased considerably from 2011. The short-term evolution of imports cannot be associated to the monthly evolution of production and both imports and industrial output are currently basically driven by the low aggregate demand in the EU. However, the current account has not deteriorated as in the US, since EU imports and exports, especially the export of services, have both grown proportionately.

The share of manufacturing in EU 27 added value has been falling since the 1990s. In order to reverse this long term declining trend from its current level of around 16% of GDP to 20% by 2020, the Commission is implementing a reinforced industrial policy to improve the competitiveness and the importance of the manufacturing base in all Member States. It should be noted as well that there are also some relatively smaller economies among the Member States whose industrial base already represents more than 20% of GDP.

The updated industrial policy ([2]) proposes to focus investment and innovation on 6 priority action lines ([3]) for immediate action. This renewed industrial policy strategy proposes a partnership between the EU, its Member States and industry to give Europe a competitive lead in the new industrial revolution and a new impetus to job creation.

The Commission will report on the implementation of this policy in September this year.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/index_en.htm

([2]) 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery' (COM(2012) 582 final of 10 October 2012), at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:EN:PDF
It is based on four pillars: 1) providing framework conditions to stimulate new investment, speed up the adoption of new technologies and boost resource efficiency; 2) improving the functioning of the internal market and opening up international markets to facilitate recovery; 3) improving access to finance, especially for SMEs; 4) implementing measures to increase investment in human capital and skills and policies aimed at job creation.

([3]) Advanced manufacturing technologies, key enabling technologies, bio-based products, sustainable industrial and construction policy and raw material, clean vehicles and smart grids.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003746/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Situația femeilor în UE

Conform statisticilor publicate de Eurostat, la 8 martie 2013, la nivelul UE, 85% dintre cadrele didactice din învățământul primar și 59% dintre cadrele didactice din învățământul liceal erau femei, în timp ce doar o treime dintre manageri, 40% din personalul academic, 45% dintre medici erau femei.

De asemenea, statisticile Eurostat arată că, pentru reconcilierea vieții de familie cu activitatea profesională, în 2011, 32% dintre femeile și 5% dintre bărbații având un copil cu vârsta de sub 6 ani au lucrat cu normă parțială de timp, iar 26% dintre femeile angajate cu normă întreagă au utilizat un orar flexibil de lucru. Aceste prevederi depind foarte mult de legislația națională și de politicile aplicate de angajatori.

Având în vedere datele mai sus menționate, precum și lipsa serviciilor de îngrijire atât a copiilor cu vârsta de sub trei ani, cât și a copiilor de vârstă preșcolară, aș dori să întreb Comisia:

1. Care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia le are în vedere, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a permite o mai bună reconciliere a vieții de familie cu activitatea profesională pentru părinții cu copii de vârstă preșcolară?

2. Care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia le are în vedere, împreună cu statele membre, pentru reducerea decalajului de salarizare dintre femei și bărbați?

3. Care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia le are în vedere, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a încuraja mai mult femeile să îmbrățișeze o carieră în domeniul ICT, în domeniul medical, în domeniul academic sau ca manageri de întreprinderi?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(30 mai 2013)

1. Comisia o invită pe distinsa membră să consulte răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-000355/2013, adresată de dl Konstantinos Poupakis.

2. Comisia o invită pe distinsa membră să consulte răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-002752/2013, adresată de dna Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE) și de dna Lívia Járóka (PPE).

3. Comisia sprijină politicile statelor membre printr-o gamă largă de inițiative în sectorul educației, al tehnologiei informației și comunicațiilor și al cercetării pentru a spori gradul de sensibilizare a opiniei publice cu privire la stereotipurile și obstacolele care stau în calea carierelor femeilor din domeniul științei și tehnologiei. Comunicarea „Regândirea educației: investiții în competențe pentru rezultate socioeconomice mai bune” ([1]) subliniază ideea că statele membre ar trebui să depună eforturi mai mari pentru a acorda prioritate competențelor legate de știință, tehnologie, inginerie și matematică și să facă aceste domenii mai atractive pentru femei. Anul trecut, Comisia a lansat campania „Știința le stă bine fetelor”, adresată fetelor cu vârsta între 13 și 18 ani ([2]). În comunicarea sa „Un parteneriat consolidat al Spațiului european de cercetare pentru excelență și creștere” ([3]), Comisia invită statele membre să elimine barierele din calea recrutării, reținerii și evoluției profesionale a cercetătorilor femei, să soluționeze inegalitatea dintre sexe în cadrul proceselor decizionale și să consolideze principiul egalității dintre sexe în cadrul programelor de cercetare. În plus, în ianuarie 2013, Comisia a adoptat Planul de acțiune Antreprenoriat 2020 ([4]). Unul dintre cele trei elemente de bază ale planului este crearea unor modele de urmat și valorificarea potențialului antreprenorial neexploatat al femeilor antreprenori.

([1]) COM (2012) 669, „Regândirea educației: investiții în competențe pentru rezultate socioeconomice mai bune”.
([2]) http://science-girl-thing.eu/ro
([3]) COM(2012) 392 final.
([4]) COM (2012) 795.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003746/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Women in the EU

According to statistics published by Eurostat on 8 March 2013, 85% of teachers in primary education and 59% of teachers in secondary education in the EU are women, whereas only one third of managers, 40% of academic staff and 45% of physicians are women.

The Eurostat statistics also show that in order to reconcile work and family life, in 2011 32% of women and 5% of men with a child under the age of six worked part-time, while 26% of female full-time employees used flexible hours. The rules vary widely depending on the national legislation and the policies applied by employers.

Bearing in the mind the figures cited above, and the lack of childcare services for children under the age of three and for pre-school children, will the Commission say:

1. What it and the Member States intend to do so that parents with pre-school age children can better reconcile work and family life?

2. What it and the Member States intend to do in order to reduce the salary gap between women and men?

3. What it and the Member States intend to do to encourage more women to take up a career in the ICT sector, medicine, the academic world or as business managers?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000355/2013 by Mr Konstantinos Poupakis.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E- 002752/2013 by Ms Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE) and Ms Lívia Járóka (PPE).

3. The Commission supports Member States policies through a wide range of initiatives in the field of education, ICT and research to increase awareness on stereotypes and obstacles to the careers of women in science and technology. The communication 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' ([1]) underlines that Member States should make greater efforts to prioritise science, technology, engineering and mathematics related skills and to make these fields more attractive to women. Last year the Commission launched the campaign 'Science it's a girl thing!' targeted to 13-18 aged girls ([2]). In its communication 'A Reinforced European Research Area: Partnership for Excellence and Growth' ([3]) the Commission invites Members States to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers, to address gender imbalance in decision making and to strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes. Moreover, the Commission adopted in January 2013 the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([4]). One of its three pillars is the creation of role models and reach out to the untapped entrepreneurial potential of women entrepreneurs.

([1]) COM(2012) 669 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes'.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/science-girl-thing.
([3]) COM(2012) 392 final.
([4]) COM(2012) 795.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003747/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Restricții aplicate de Elveția lucrătorilor comunitari

Guvernul Elveției ar putea stabili în perioada următoare limite cu privire la numărul cetățenilor UE care au dreptul de a lucra în această țară, prin extinderea restricțiilor introduse anul trecut împotriva lucrătorilor provenind din opt state ale Uniunii. Comisia este rugată să prezinte un punct de vedere oficial cu privire la această inițiativă și să precizeze care sunt acțiunile întreprinse în cadrul relațiilor bilaterale în vederea soluționării acestei probleme.

Anul trecut, Comisia a arătat că reinstituirea limitelor cantitative pentru resortisanții celor opt state membre este o încălcare a obligațiilor care îi revin Elveției în temeiul Acordului privind libera circulație a persoanelor. Comisia a afirmat că intenționează să ridice această chestiune în cadrul Comitetului mixt, mecanismul pentru soluționarea litigiilor instituit prin acordul menționat.

Care au fost rezultatele acestei discuții inițiate și de ce problema menționată nu a fost soluționată, punându-se chiar problema extinderii restricțiilor?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreşedintele Comisiei Europene în numele Comisiei
(11 iunie 2013)

La 24 aprilie, Înaltul Reprezentant al Uniunii Europene pentru afaceri externe și politica de securitate/Vicepreședintele Comisiei, a făcut o declarație în care își exprima regretul cu privire la decizia guvernului elvețian ([1]).

Chestiunea a fost ridicată în cadrul reuniunii Comitetului mixt din iunie 2012. Cu toate acestea, discuțiile nu au condus la niciun rezultat. Din acest motiv, Comisia va iniția acțiuni în instanță pentru aplicarea acordurilor cu Elveția.

Comisia va examina dacă sunt îndeplinite condițiile pentru aplicarea clauzei de salvgardare cu privire la toate celelalte 25 de state membre și va lua în considerare posibilitatea de a răspunde deciziei guvernului elvețian.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-260_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003747/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Restrictions imposed by Switzerland on EU workers

The Swiss Government may be about to impose limits on the number of EU citizens with the right to work in Switzerland, by extending the restrictions introduced last year with regard to workers from eight EU countries. Will the Commission state its position with regard to this initiative and state what actions have been taken in its bilateral relations with Switzerland in order to solve this problem?

Last year, the Commission stated that the re-establishment of quantitative limits for nationals of the eight Member States was in breach of Switzerland's obligations under the Agreement on the free movement of persons. The Commission stated that it intended to raise the issue through the Joint Committee, the mechanism established by the Agreement for the settlement of disputes.

What were the results of the initial talks and why has this problem not been solved, with the prospect of further restrictions now on the cards?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

On 24 April, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission issued a statement regretting the decision of the Swiss Government ([1]).

The issue was raised during the Joint Committee in June 2012. However, the talks did not bring results. For this reason the Commission seeks establishing judicial enforcement of the agreements with Switzerland.

The Commission will examine if the conditions for the application of the safeguard clause for all the 25 Member States are met and will consider proposing a reaction to the Swiss decision.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-260_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003748/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Neaplicarea Memorandumului cu privire la standardizarea încărcătoarelor pentru telefoanele mobile

În urma inițiativei Comisiei, conform „Memorandumului de înțelegere" (Memorandum of Understanding), companiile de telefonie mobilă care operează în Uniunea Europeană au convenit voluntar să producă, începând cu 2010, încărcătoare compatibile între mărcile de telefoane mobile.

Comisia a arătat că va monitoriza evoluția pieței în 2011 și 2012 cu privire la aplicarea Memorandumului.

În mod evident, nu au existat progrese în aceasta privință.

Comisia este rugată să își exprime punctul de vedere cu privire la aplicarea defectuoasă a Memorandumului.

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(3 iunie 2013)

Un recent raport intermediar furnizat de semnatarii memorandului de înțelegere (MoU) a arătat că aceștia și-au îndeplinit obligațiile conform memorandumului în cauză. În prezent, se estimează că 90 % dintre noile dispozitive care au fost introduse pe piață de către semnatarii MoU și de alți producători, până la sfârșitul anului 2012, sunt compatibile cu un încărcător universal. Aceasta indică faptul că acordul voluntar a fost încununat de succes în ceea ce privește oferirea de avantaje cetățenilor.

Comisia este convinsă că atât consumatorii, cât și producătorii pot beneficia de o extindere a inițiativei de armonizare a încărcătoarelor la noi categorii de produse, cum ar fi noua generație de telefoane mobile, ținând seama în același timp de inovațiile tehnologice, și alte mici dispozitive electronice portabile, cum ar fi aparatele fotografice digitale, tabletele și playerele audio personale.

În această privință, ar trebui menționat faptul că semnatarii au reacționat la solicitarea Comisiei de a extinde actualul memorandum, prin trimiterea unei scrisori de intenție prin care și-au manifestat această intenție în privința generației actuale de telefoane mobile și a încărcătoarelor acestora, precum și în privința armonizării unui tip de încărcător pentru viitoarele generații de telefoane mobile.

În plus, Comisia pregătește lansarea unui studiu care să evalueze rezultatele obținute ca urmare a punerii în practică a memorandumului de înțelegere; acest studiu urmează să fie finalizat în 2014 și va analiza opțiunile privind măsurile ulterioare adecvate, inclusiv opțiunea unei noi sfere de aplicare mai cuprinzătoare a unui acord voluntar și a unei legislații îmbunătățite.

De asemenea, Comisia ar dori să aducă în atenția distinsului deputat răspunsurile sale la întrebările scrise E-1685/2013, adresată de dna Olga Sehnalová, E-2977/2013, adresată de dl Tadeusz Zwiefka și E-3338/13, adresată de dl Philippe Boulland.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003748/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Non-application of the Memorandum on the standardisation of mobile phone chargers

In response to the Commission initiative set out in the memorandum of understanding regarding harmonisation of a charging capacity for mobile phones, mobile phone companies operating in the European Union voluntarily agreed, starting from 2010, to produce mobile phone chargers that were compatible for different makes of mobile phone.

The Commission stated that it would monitor the evolution of the market in 2011 and 2012 as regards application of the Memorandum.

Clearly there has been no progress in this respect.

Will the Commission state its position on the non-application of the Memorandum?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

A recent progress report provided by the MoU signatories has shown that these have met their obligations under the MoU. It is now estimated that 90% of the new devices put on the market by the MoU signatories and other manufacturers by the end of 2012 support the common charging capability. This indicates that the voluntary agreement has been successful in delivering benefits for citizens.

The Commission is convinced that consumers and manufacturers can benefit from an extension of the initiative on harmonisation of chargers to new categories of products such as the new generation of mobile phones while taking into account technological innovations and other small portable electronic devices, such as digital cameras, tablets and music players.

In this regard, it should be mentioned that the signatories have reacted to the Commission's request to extend the current MoU, by sending a Letter of Intent stating their intention for the current generation of mobile phones and their chargers and for the harmonisation of a charging capability for the future generations of mobile phones.

Furthermore, the Commission is preparing the launch of a study evaluating the results achieved with the MoU to be completed in 2014 and will consider options for appropriate follow-up, including a new and extended scope of a voluntary agreement and legislation for improvement.

The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-1685/2013 by Ms Olga Sehnalová, E-2977/2013 by Mr Tadeusz Zwiefka and E-3338/13 by Mr Philippe Boulland.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003749/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Importurile de carne de cal din SUA

Recentele dezbateri publice cu privire la consumul de carne de cal au adus în atenția publicului problema importurilor de carne de cal din statele extracomunitare. Organizații neguvernamentale (Humane Society International, de exemplu) afirmă că 20 % din carnea de cal vândută în UE nu respectă reglementările europene privind siguranța alimentară și sănătatea, nefiind disponibile informații referitoare la medicamentele care au fost administrate animalelor.

Comisia este rugată să prezinte măsurile pe care le are în vedere pentru o mai bună reglementare în această privință, având în vedere mai ales impactul deosebit asupra opiniei publice al recentelor evenimente legate de consumul de carne de cal.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(15 mai 2013)

Distinsul membru este rugat să consulte răspunsurile la întrebările E-003089/2013 și E-003327/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003749/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Imports of horsemeat from the USA

The recent public debate about the consumption of horsemeat has brought into the public eye the question of imports of horsemeat from non-EU countries. According to NGOs such as Humane Society International, 20% of horsemeat sold in the EU does not meet European food safety and health rules as information is not provided regarding medicines that have been administered to animals.

Will the Commission say what it intends to do to ensure better regulation of this issue, considering the major repercussions on public opinion that have resulted from recent events relating to the consumption of horsemeat?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to questions E-003089/2013 and E-003327/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003750/13
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Geldabflüsse aus Zypern trotz geschlossener Banken und Sperren für den Zahlungsverkehr

In verschiedenen Presseberichten, unter anderem seitens der Europäischen Zentralbank, wurde das Problem auffällig hoher Geldabflüsse aus Zypern, trotz geschlossener Banken und einer Sperre für den Zahlungsverkehr, thematisiert.

1. Ist der Kommission das genannte Problem bekannt? Wenn ja: Kann die Kommission die Höhe des zu Unrecht abgeflossenen Vermögens beziffern?

2. Ist der Kommission bekannt,

a) wer das Geld aus Zypern abgezogen hat und

b) wer in Zypern diesen Abfluss zugelassen hat?

3. Hat die Kommission Untersuchungen zu den genannten Fragen eingeleitet oder plant sie, dies noch zu tun?

4. Hat die Kommission Maßnahmen ergriffen, um den Abfluss der Gelder zu unterbinden/einzudämmen?

5. Welche Konsequenzen hat der Abfluss der Gelder für die beteiligten Verantwortlichen?

6. Was sind aus Sicht der Kommission die Gründe dafür, dass die Kapitalsverkehrskontrollen in Zypern nicht den gewünschten Effekt erzielt haben?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2013)

Die Einlagenströme für alle Banken sowie die Zahlungs- und Überweisungsanträge und entsprechende Genehmigungen der Zentralbank von Zypern werden streng überwacht. Die Kommission hat keine detaillierten Informationen darüber, wer Geld aus Zypern abgezogen hat. Es ist jedoch darauf hinzuweisen, dass Zahlungen für die Abwicklung wesentlicher Geschäftsvorgänge erlaubt sind, z. B. für die Einfuhr von Kraftstoffen, Nahrungs- und Arzneimitteln. Die Kommission weiß aus der Presse von den laufenden Untersuchungen bezüglich der Rechtmäßigkeit bestimmter Kapitalabflüsse, ist daran aber nicht beteiligt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003750/13
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Money drain from Cyprus despite bank closures and bans on payment transactions

Various press reports, including from the European Central Bank, have addressed the issue of remarkably high flows of money from Cyprus despite bank closures and a ban on payment transactions.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem? If so, can the Commission estimate the amount of capital that has flowed out of the country illegally?

2. Does the Commission know

(a) who has taken money out of Cyprus and

(b) who in Cyprus authorised this flow of money?

3. Has the Commission conducted investigations into the above or does it plan to do so?

4. Has the Commission taken steps to prevent or stem the flow of capital?

5. What are the consequences of the flow of money for those responsible?

6. According to the Commission, why have capital controls in Cyprus not achieved their desired result?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The deposit flows for all banks as well as the payment and transfer requests to and approvals by the Central Bank of Cyprus are closely monitored. The Commission does not have detailed information on who is taken money out of Cyprus. It must, however, be noted that payments are allowed for settling essential transactions related e.g. to the import of fuel, foodstuff and pharmaceutical products. The Commission is aware via the press of ongoing investigations into the legitimacy of some capital outflows, but it is not involved.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003751/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αυτοδίκαιη αργία δημοσίων λειτουργών

Με τη διάταξη της περίπτωσης 1 της υποπαραγράφου Ζ.3 του άρθρου μόνου του Ν. 4093/2012 «Έγκριση Μεσοπρόθεσμου Πλαισίου Δημοσιονομικής Στρατηγικής 2013-2016» θεσπίζεται η αυτοδίκαιη αποπομπή του δημόσιου υπαλλήλου από την εργασία του, σε περίπτωση παραπομπής του στο πειθαρχικό συμβούλιο, μέχρις ότου εξεταστεί η υπόθεση και αποφανθεί το αρμόδιο όργανο για τις κατηγορίες. Η παραπάνω πειθαρχική διαδικασία καταργεί το τεκμήριο της αθωότητας και αρνείται το δικαίωμα της υπεράσπισης, αφού προβλέπει την επιβολή αυστηρών διοικητικών μέτρων χωρίς την απολογία ή την προγενέστερη ακρόαση του κατηγορούμενου. Βρίσκεται σε πλήρη αντίθεση με το άρθρο 6 § 2 της Ευρωπαϊκής Σύμβασης για την Προστασία των Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου (ΕΣΔΑ) και το άρθρο 48 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Με δεδομένο ότι: α) το τεκμήριο αθωότητας είναι ένα θεμελιώδες δικαίωμα που περιέχεται στην ΕΣΔΑ και τον Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων και αποτελεί αναπόσπαστο τμήμα της κοινοτικής έννομης τάξης, β) το άρθρο 6 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (ΣΕΕ) προβλέπει ότι η Ένωση σέβεται τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα, όπως κατοχυρώνονται με τον Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, την ΕΣΔΑ, και όπως προκύπτουν από τις κοινές συνταγματικές παραδόσεις των κρατών μελών, γ) οι ανωτέρω ρυθμίσεις είχαν συμφωνηθεί με την Τρόικα στο πλαίσιο του μεσοπρόθεσμου προγράμματος, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Με την παραπάνω διάταξη παραβιάζεται το τεκμήριο αθωότητας;

— Αν ναι, υπάρχει δυνατότητα επανεξέτασης της παραπάνω ρύθμισης, ώστε να μην προσβάλλονται η ΕΣΔΑ και ο Χάρτης Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2013)

Οι διατάξεις περί λειτουργίας των ελληνικών δημόσιων υπηρεσιών και η συμβατότητά τους με το εθνικό και το διεθνές δίκαιο υπάγονται στην αρμοδιότητα της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η εν λόγω διάταξη δεν αποτελεί κατά κανένα τρόπο διαπίστωση ενοχής ή αθωότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003751/13
to the Commission
Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Automatic suspension of civil servants

Subparagraph G.3 of the sole Article of Law 4093/2012 'Approval Medium Term Fiscal Strategy 2013-2016' provides for the automatic suspension of civil servants in the event of referral to the Disciplinary Board until the case is examined and the competent body reaches a decision on the charges. The above disciplinary procedure removes the presumption of innocence and denies the accused person the right of defence, since it provides for the imposition of strict administrative measures without giving him or her the right to justify his or her conduct or the right to a prior hearing. This is completely incompatible with Article 6 (2) of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights (ECHR) and Article 48 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Given that: a) the presumption of innocence is a fundamental right, which is enshrined in the ECHR and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and is an integral part of Community law; b) Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) provides that the Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the ECHR and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States; c) the above arrangements had been agreed with the Troika as part of the medium-term programme, will the Commission say:

— Does this provision violate the principle of the presumption of innocence?

— If so, is it possible to revise the above measure so as to bring it in line with the ECHR and the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Provisions on the functioning of the Greek civil service and their compatibility with domestic and international law are the responsibility of the Greek Government. The Commission believes, however, that this provision is in no way a determination of guilt or innocence.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003752/13
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Pferdefleisch-Skandal — Kontrollen durch die Kommission

Im Januar 2013 berichtete Irland als erster EU-Mitgliedstaat von dem Fund von Pferdefleisch in als Rindfleisch gekennzeichneten Lebensmitteln, gefolgt von Funden von Falschetikettierung in Frankreich und vielen weiteren Mitgliedstaaten. Am 28. Februar sagte Kommissar Tonio Borg bei einer Sitzung des Ausschusses für Umweltfragen, öffentliche Gesundheit und Lebensmittelsicherheit, dass die Hauptverantwortung der Kontrolle von Lebensmitteletikettierung bei den Mitgliedstaaten liege. Tatsächlich hat aber auch die Kommission durch das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt die Verpflichtung zu überprüfen, ob das europäische Lebensmitteletikettierungsrecht in den Mitgliedstaaten richtig implementiert und umgesetzt wird.

Sind die Kontrollen vonseiten der Kommission im Hinblick auf den Pferdefleisch-Skandal als effizient zu unterbinden?

Was kann aus Sicht der Kommission getan werden, um einen solchen Etikettenschwindel in Zukunft zu vermeiden?

Auf dem Dringlichkeitstreffen der Kommission vom 13. Februar 2013 wurde über einen Aktionsplan gesprochen. Wie weit ist dieser Plan vorangekommen, was beinhaltet er und wann soll er umgesetzt werden?

Flossen EU-Gelder in einen der Betriebe, die wissentlich Fleischprodukte falsch etikettierten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2013)

1. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind für die Durchsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften für die Lebensmittelkette zuständig ([1]). Sie müssen ein System amtlicher Kontrollen einrichten, um die Einhaltung der diesbezüglichen Anforderungen durch Unternehmer zu prüfen. Die Kommission überwacht, unter anderem durch Vor-Ort-Prüfungen, die Erfüllung der Kontrollpflichten durch die Mitgliedstaaten. In dem von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannten Fall konnten anhand der von den Mitgliedstaaten eingerichteten Systeme amtlicher Kontrollen Verstöße gegen die geltenden Vorschriften ermittelt werden. Bislang besteht kein Grund zur Annahme, dass die in den Mitgliedstaaten eingerichteten Kontrollsysteme nicht wirksam seien. Dies gilt auch für die Kontrollen, die die Kommission zur Überprüfung solcher Systeme durchführt.

2. Betrügerische und irreführende Kennzeichnungspraktiken können durch eine angemessene Durchsetzung der Bestimmungen des EU-Lebensmittelrechts verhindert werden. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen auch weiterhin amtliche Kontrollen durchführen und abschreckende und wirksame Sanktionen verhängen. Mit ihrem neuen Vorschlag für amtliche Kontrollen zielt die Kommission darauf ab, das bestehende System einschließlich der Bestimmungen über Sanktionen weiter zu stärken.

3. Die Kommission hat einen Aktionsplan erstellt und diesen am 20. März 2013 den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelt. Darin sind die Bereiche aufgeführt, in denen Maßnahmen erforderlich sind, um das EU-System zu stärken und das Vertrauen der Verbraucher wieder herzustellen. Zu den ermittelten prioritären Bereichen zählen Maßnahmen zur besseren Bekämpfung von Lebensmittelbetrug, strengere Vorschriften für Pferdepässe, wirksamere amtliche Kontrollen sowie Vorschriften zur Ursprungskennzeichnung.

4. In den Mitgliedstaaten laufen derzeit Untersuchungen, um die für fehlerhafte Kennzeichnungen verantwortlichen Unternehmen zu identifizieren.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über amtliche Kontrollen zur Überprüfung der Einhaltung des Lebensmittel- und Futtermittelrechts sowie der Bestimmungen über Tiergesundheit und Tierschutz, ABl. L 165 vom 30.4.2004, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003752/13
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Horse meat scandal — Checks by the Commission

In January 2013, Ireland was the first EU Member State to report that horse meat had been found in food labelled as beef. Mislabelling was subsequently discovered in France and many other Member States. On 28 February, Commissioner Tonio Borg said at a meeting of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety that the main responsibility for checking food labelling lay with the Member States, although the Commission does also have an obligation to verify whether food labelling laws are correctly implemented and transposed in the Member States through its Food and Veterinary Office.

Can the Commission's checks be described as efficient in the light of the horse meat scandal?

In the Commission's opinion, what can be done to avoid similar deceptive labelling in the future?

At the Commission's emergency meeting on 13 February 2013 there was talk of an action plan. How advanced is this plan, what does it include and when is it due to be implemented?

Did any of the companies that knowingly mislabelled meat products receive any EU funding?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

1. The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States ([1]), which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom. The Commission monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the official controls systems established by the Member States allowed them to identify violations of applicable rules. So far, there is no reason to believe that the official controls systems established in Member States are ineffective. The same goes for the controls the Commission carries out to verify those systems.

2. Fraudulent and deceptive labelling practices can be eliminated with appropriate enforcement of Union food law requirements. Member States must continue to perform official controls and impose dissuasive and effective sanctions. The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

3. An action plan was prepared by the Commission and sent to Member States on 20 March 2013. It identifies the areas in which action is needed in order to strengthen the EU system and restore consumer confidence. Priority areas identified include action to better tackle food fraud, strengthened rules on horse passports, more effective official controls and origin labelling rules.

4. Investigations are currently ongoing in Member States to identify the companies responsible for the mislabelling.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003753/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(3. April 2013)

Betrifft: Antisemitismus in den Mitgliedstaaten der EU

Antisemitische Ereignisse häufen sich immer mehr innerhalb der EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Besonders alarmierend ist der wachsende Antisemitismus in Ungarn.

Einer aktuellen Studie der Anti-Defamation League (ADL) nach stimmten 63 % der Ungarn, 53 % der Spanier und 48 % der Polen antisemitischen Aussagen zu. Die 2012 ausgeführte, aber noch nicht veröffentlichte Studie der Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte (FRA) zu diesem Thema wird aller Voraussicht nach genauso alarmierend, wenn nicht gar schlimmer ausfallen.

1. Ist die Kommission sich der Tatsache bewusst, dass Antisemitismus ein zunehmendes Problem in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten ist?

2. Wenn ja, welche Schritte erwägt sie zu unternehmen, um dem steigenden Antisemitismus entgegenzutreten?

3. In den meisten Mitgliedstaaten gibt es kaum Umfragen zu Antisemitismus. Wird die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten hierzu auffordern?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(21. Mai 2013)

Die Kommission verurteilt alle Formen und Ausdrucksweisen von Antisemitismus, da sie mit den Grundwerten der EU unvereinbar sind. Sie bekämpft diese entschieden, indem sie die Umsetzung des Rahmenbeschlusses zu Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit über das Verbot von rassistisch und fremdenfeindlich motivierten Äußerungen und Straftaten sowie die Umsetzung der Richtlinie über audiovisuelle Mediendienste genauestens überwacht, in der die Aufstachelung zu Hassreden aus Gründen der Religion oder der Herkunft in audiovisuellen Mediendiensten untersagt wird. Es liegt jedoch im Aufgabenbereich der nationalen Behörden, sich mit individuellen Fällen zu befassen und zu beurteilen, ob diese eine Aufstachelung zu Gewalt oder Hass darstellen.

Die Tätigkeiten von Interessenträgern zur Bekämpfung von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit vor Ort sowie Maßnahmen zum Gedenken an die Opfer des Holocaust werden finanziell unterstützt. Die Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte erhebt Daten zu Themen wie Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit ([1]). Die Ergebnisse der Erhebung zu Wahrnehmungen und Erfahrungen der jüdischen Bevölkerung im Zusammenhang mit Antisemitismus werden voraussichtlich im Oktober 2013 veröffentlicht ([2]).

Die systematische Datenerfassung zu Hassverbrechen auf der Ebene der Mitgliedstaaten ist nicht so weit fortgeschritten wie sie sein sollte. Einem aktuellen Bericht der Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte ist zu entnehmen, dass nur vier Mitgliedstaaten umfassende Daten zu diesem Thema erheben ([3]). Die Kommission ist bestrebt, die Erhebung von nationalen Daten über Hassverbrechen zu verbessern, indem sie die Tätigkeiten der Interessenträger in diesem Bereich durch ihre Finanzierungsprogramme unterstützt. Das Thema der Datenerhebung wurde auch in der Gruppe der Regierungssachverständigen thematisiert, die eingerichtet wurde, um die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Umsetzung des Rahmenbeschlusses zur Bekämpfung von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit ([4]) zu unterstützen.

([1]) Nähere Informationen zu den Tätigkeiten der Kommission in diesem Bereich sind auf der Website der Generaldirektion Justiz abrufbar: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_de.htm
([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-jewish-peoples-experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism
([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2012_hate-crime.pdf
([4]) Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI des Rates vom 28. November 2008 zur strafrechtlichen Bekämpfung bestimmter Formen und Ausdrucksweisen von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit, ABl. L 328 vom 6.12.2008, S. 55-58.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003753/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Anti-Semitism in the Member States of the EU

Incidences of anti-Semitism are becoming more and more frequent in the EU Member States. The growing anti-Semitism in Hungary is of particular concern.

According to a recent study by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), 63% of Hungarians, 53% of Spaniards and 48% of Poles agreed with anti-Semitic statements. It looks like the as yet unpublished study on the same subject carried out in 2012 by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) will show equally alarming, if not worse, results.

1. Is the Commission aware that anti-Semitism is a growing problem in the Member States?

2. If so, what steps is it thinking of taking to combat this increasing anti-Semitism?

3. Hardly any surveys on anti-Semitism have been conducted in most Member States. Will the Commission ask the Member States to conduct some?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of anti-Semitism, as they are incompatible with the values on which the EU is founded and is committed to fighting against this phenomenon including by monitoring closely the implementation of the framework Decision on racism and xenophobia prohibiting racist or xenophobic speech and crime, and the Audiovisual Media Services Directive banning incitement to racial or religious hatred speech in audiovisual media services. It is however for national authorities to look into individual cases and to determine whether they represent incitement to violence or hatred.

Financial support is given to stakeholders' activities aimed at combating racism and xenophobia on the ground and to commemorating the victims of the Holocaust. The Fundamental Rights Agency collects data on issues of racism and xenophobia ([1]). The results of its survey of Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of anti-Semitism are expected to be published in October 2013 ([2]).

The systematic collection of data on hate crime at the level of Member States is not as well developed as it should be. A recent report by the Fundamental Rights Agency shows that only four Member States collect such data in a comprehensive manner ([3]). The Commission aims to support the efforts to improve the collection of national hate crime data by providing assistance through its financing programmes to stakeholders' activities in this area. The issue of data collection has also been addressed in the group of governmental experts set up to assist Member States in the implementation of the framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia ([4]).

([1]) For further information about the Commission's activities in this field, please see the website of the Directorate-General Justice at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-jewish-peoples-experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism
([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2012_hate-crime.pdf
([4]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55-58.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003754/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Λογιστική καταγραφή επιδοτήσεων προϊόντων

Σύμφωνα με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Κανονισμό ESA95, ως επιδοτήσεις νοούνται οι «τρέχουσες μονομερείς πληρωμές που καταβάλλονται από το δημόσιο ή από τα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ σε παραγωγούς εμπορεύσιμου προϊόντος, με στόχο να επηρεαστούν τα επίπεδα παραγωγής, οι τιμές τους ή η αμοιβή των συντελεστών της παραγωγής» (D.3). Στον ίδιο κανονισμό ορίζεται και η επιδότηση προϊόντων, στις οποίες συγκαταλέγονται «οι επιδοτήσεις που καταβάλλονται ανά μονάδα ενός αγαθού ή μιας υπηρεσίας» (D.31, παρ. 4.33) καθώς επίσης και οι «επιδοτήσεις σε δημόσιες επιχειρήσεις και οιονεί επιχειρήσεις για αντιστάθμιση των συνεχών ζημιών τις οποίες υφίστανται, όσον αφορά τις παραγωγικές δραστηριότητές τους, επειδή χρεώνουν τιμές που είναι χαμηλότερες από το μέσο κόστος παραγωγής, λόγω συγκεκριμένης κρατικής ή ευρωπαϊκής οικονομικής και κοινωνικής πολιτικής» (D.319, παρ 4.35.γ).

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η συνήθης πρακτική στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, όσον αφορά την καταγραφή των επιδοτήσεων προϊόντων στους ισολογισμούς των κρατικών επιχειρήσεων; Εμφανίζονται ως έσοδα ή ως έξοδα των επιχειρήσεων αυτών;

2. Ποια κράτη μέλη, και για ποιους κλάδους επιχειρήσεων, καταγράφουν τις επιδοτήσεις προϊόντων στα έσοδα των ισολογισμών αυτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Μαΐου 2013)

1. Η συνήθης πρακτική που ακολουθούν τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ για την καταγραφή των επιδοτήσεων των προϊόντων στους ισολογισμούς των κρατικοποιημένων επιχειρήσεων είναι να συμπεριλαμβάνουν τα εν λόγω ποσά στην παραγωγή τους (δηλαδή στα έσοδα). Αυτό οφείλεται στο γεγονός ότι η παραγωγή αξιολογείται σε τιμές οι οποιες περιλαμβάνουν τις επιδοτήσεις των προϊόντων (ΕΣΛ 95, παράγραφοι 3.47 και 3.48). Η εν λόγω διαδικασία εφαρμόζεται σε κρατικοποιημένες επιχειρήσεις, οι οποίες συμμετέχουν στην αγορά και, συνεπώς, κατατάσσονται στον εταιρικό τομέα.

Όταν οι κρατικοποιημένες επιχειρήσεις δεν συμμετέχουν στην αγορά, κατατάσσονται στον γενικό κυβερνητικό τομέα. Στην περίπτωση αυτή, η επιδότηση αποτελεί μεν έσοδο των κρατικοποιημένων επιχειρήσεων, κατατάσσεται δε ως μεταβίβαση και όχι ως επιδότηση προϊόντος.

2. Καταρχήν, οι εν λόγω συνήθεις κανόνες εφαρμόζονται από όλα τα κράτη μέλη. Κατά τη διάρκεια των εργασιών ελέγχου σχετικά με τα στοιχεία των εθνικών λογαριασμών των κρατών μελών, η Eurostat ελέγχει εάν οι εν λόγω κανόνες εξακολουθούν να εφαρμόζονται.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003754/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Reporting subsidies on products

According to ESA95, subsidies are current unrequited payments which a government or the institutions of the European Union make to producers, with the objective of influencing their levels of production, their prices or the remuneration of production factors. ESA95 also stipulates that subsidies on products include subsidies payable per unit of a good or service (D.31, paragraph 4.33) and subsidies to public corporations and quasi-corporations to compensate for persistent losses which they incur on their productive activities as a result of charging prices which are lower than their average costs of production as a matter of deliberate government or European economic and social policy (D.319, paragraph 4.35.c).

1. What is the standard practice applied in the EU Member States for reporting subsidies on products in the annual accounts of nationalised undertakings? Are they reported by those undertakings as income or expenditure?

2. Which Member States report subsidies on products as income in the annual accounts and for which sectors of undertakings?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

1. The standard practice used by EU Member States for reporting subsidies on products in the annual accounts of nationalised undertakings is to include these amounts in their output (i.e. income). This is because output is evaluated at prices that include subsidies on products (ESA 95, paragraphs 3.47 and 3.48). This treatment is applied for nationalised undertakings which are market and are therefore classified in the corporations sector.

When nationalised undertakings are non-market, they are classified in the general government sector. In this case, the subsidy is also an income of the nationalised undertakings but is classified as a transfer and not a subsidy on product.

2. In principle, these standard rules are applied by all Member States. During its verification tasks on Member States' national accounts data, Eurostat checks that these rules continue to be applied.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003755/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανακεφαλαιοποίηση Κυπριακών Τραπεζών

Ο Ευρωπαϊκός Μηχανισμός Σταθερότητας (ESM) διαθέτει, κυρίως, δύο μηχανισμούς στήριξης κρατών μελών σε περιόδους κρίσης. Ο πρώτος μηχανισμός αφορά δάνεια στήριξης εθνικών οικονομιών μέσα στο πλαίσιο ενός μακροοικονομικού προγράμματος προσαρμογής, ενώ ο δεύτερος μηχανισμός αφορά δάνεια για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών. Στις 27 Ιουνίου 2012, το Eurogroup ενέκρινε τις αιτήσεις της Κύπρου και της Ισπανίας για χρηματοοικονομική βοήθεια. Στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου, έγινε χρήση του μηχανισμού δανειοδότησης στο πλαίσιο μακροοικονομικού προγράμματος προσαρμογής, ενώ στην περίπτωση της Ισπανίας, οι τράπεζές της ανακεφαλαιοποιήθηκαν με τη χρήση του μηχανισμού ανακεφαλαιοποίησης μέσω του ESM.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Για ποιο λόγο, κατά τη γνώμη της, υπήρξε αυτή η διαφοροποίηση στην αντιμετώπιση της ανακεφαλαιοποίησης των τραπεζών, μεταξύ Κύπρου και Ισπανίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Ο ΕΜΣ διαθέτει ποικίλα μέσα για την επίλυση των ποικίλων προβλημάτων που αντιμετωπίζουν τα μέλη του. Η Ισπανία ζήτησε και έλαβε δάνειο από τον ΕΜΣ αποκλειστικά για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών της. Η Κύπρος ζήτησε δάνειο από τον ΕΜΣ, το οποίο μπορεί να χρησιμοποιήσει η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση για διάφορους σκοπούς, μεταξύ των οποίων και η ανακεφαλαιοποίηση ορισμένων τραπεζών. Ο λόγος της διαφορετικής αντιμετώπισης είναι ότι καθένα από αυτά τα κράτη μέλη ζήτησε διαφορετικό μέσο στήριξης και έχει διαφορετικές χρηματοδοτικές ανάγκες. Οι ανάγκες χρηματοδότησης της Ισπανίας συνδέονταν με τον χρηματοπιστωτικό της τομέα, ενώ η Κύπρος χρειάζεται βοήθεια λόγω της δημοσιονομικής της θέσης και των χρηματοδοτικών προβλημάτων της καθώς και των αναγκών του χρηματοπιστωτικού της τομέα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003755/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Recapitalisation of Cypriot banks

The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) basically has two mechanisms for supporting Member States in times of crisis. The first mechanism is used to grant loans to support national economies within the framework of a macroeconomic adjustment programme and the second mechanism is used to grant loans in order to recapitalise banks. On 27 June 2012, the Eurogroup approved requests by Cyprus and Spain for financial assistance. The mechanism for granting loans within the framework of a macroeconomic adjustment programme was used for Cyprus and the mechanism to recapitalise banks via the ESM was used for Spain.

Why, in its opinion, was this distinction made between Cyprus and Spain for the purpose of recapitalising banks?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The ESM has a variety of tools to address a variety of situations within ESM Members. Spain has requested and received an ESM loan specifically and only for the purpose of recapitalising its banks. Cyprus has requested an ESM loan that may be used by the Cypriot government for a number of purposes, including recapitalising some of its banks. The reason for the distinction is that each respective Member State requested a different tool of assistance and that each Member State has different financing needs. Spanish financing needs were solely linked to its financial sector, whilst Cyprus requires assistance both due to it' s fiscal position and financing challenges and needs of its financial sector.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003756/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οφειλές τραπεζών προς το ελληνικό δημόσιο

Μετά από ερμηνεία του νόμου 3723/2008, σχετικά με την εξόφληση των κονδυλίων που έλαβαν οι ελληνικές τράπεζες από το Ελληνικό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας, αποφασίσθηκε η επιστροφή εκ μέρους των ελληνικών τραπεζών προς το ελληνικό δημόσιο ποσού ύψους περίπου 500 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ ετησίως, το οποίο εγγράφηκε και στους σχετικούς προϋπολογισμούς.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκτελέσθηκαν οι υποχρεώσεις αυτές για το έτος 2012; Τι ποσό καταβλήθηκε εκ μέρους των τραπεζών;

2. Καταβλήθηκαν τα ποσά για το 2013; Αν όχι, υπάρχουν δυσκολίες για την καταβολή τους; Τι είδους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιουνίου 2013)

Ο πυλώνας Ι που αφορούσε τη χορήγηση κρατικών ενισχύσεων προς τράπεζες το 2008, συμπεριλάμβανε την αγορά, από πλευράς κυβέρνησης, προνομιούχων μετοχών από τράπεζες, με βάση τον Νόμο 3723/2008. Το τοκομερίδιο αυτών των προνομιούχων μετοχών καταβαλλόταν συνήθως κατά το έτος που έπονταν των δεδουλευμένων τόκων. Εντούτοις, στα τέλη του 2012, λόγω της δύσκολης χρηματοπιστωτικής κατάστασης των τραπεζών και της ανάγκης για κυβερνητική στήριξη, εισήχθη τροπολογία στον Νόμο 3723/2008 βάσει της οποίας οι πληρωμές που αφορούν προνομιούχες μετοχές για το 2012-13 θα εξαρτώνται από την παραγωγή κέρδους και κεφαλαίου από πλευράς των τραπεζών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003756/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Bank debts to the Greek State

Following interpretation of Law 3723/2008 on settlement of funds paid to Greek banks from the Greek Financial Stability Fund, it has been ruled that Greek banks should repay approximately EUR 500 million per annum to the Greek State and this has been entered in the relevant budgets.

1. Was this liability discharged for 2012? How much did the banks pay?

2. Have they paid their liability for 2013? If not, was that due to difficulty in paying them? If so, what sort of difficulty?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Pillar I of the state aid to banks in 2008 involved government acquiring preference shares from banks following Law 3723/2008. The coupon of these preference shares was usually paid in the following year after the interest accrued. However, in late 2012, in view of the difficult financial situation of the banks and the need for government support, an amendment was made to the Law 3723/2008 by which payments relating to the preference shares for 2012-13 will be contingent on profit- and capital developments of the banks.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003757/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποχαρακτηρισμός Αποβλήτων Εκσκαφών από Δημόσια Έργα

Με την ΚΥΑ 36259/1757/Ε103/2010 (ΦΕΚ 1312 Β) ([1]) ενσωματώθηκε στο Ελληνικό Δίκαιο η Οδηγία 98/2008/ΕΚ, στο σκέλος που αφορά στην διαχείριση Αποβλήτων Εκσκαφών, Κατασκευών και Κατεδαφίσεων (ΑΕΚΚ). Στο άρθρο 7 της εν λόγω ΚΥΑ γίνεται διάκριση στον τρόπο με τον οποίο υποχρεούνται να συμμορφωθούν οι παραγωγοί/κάτοχοι των ΑΕΚΚ, ανάλογα με την προέλευση, σε ΑΕΚΚ που παράγονται από Ιδιωτικά Έργα και σε ΑΕΚΚ που παράγονται από Δημόσια Έργα. Στις 25.1.2013, το ΥΠΕΚΑ προχώρησε και σε περαιτέρω διαφοροποίηση στα ΑΕΚΚ των δημοσίων έργων. Συγκεκριμένα, δημοσίευσε διευκρινιστική εγκύκλιο 4834/2013 ([2]) όπου αναφέρεται «… *Σύμφωνα με τα προαναφερόμενα από τις διατάξεις της ΚΥΑ δεν απορρέει υποχρέωση διαχείρισης της περίσσειας των εκσκαφών που προέρχονται από δημόσια έργα*». Η Ελλάδα συγκαταλέγεται ανάμεσα στα κράτη μέλη που αναφέρουν στην ΕΕ πολύ χαμηλά επίπεδα κατά κεφαλήν παραγωγής ΑΕΚΚ (0,37 τόνου σε σύγκριση με το ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο 0,94) πράγμα που η Γεν. Δ/νση Περιβάλλοντος εκτιμά ότι οφείλεται σε έλλειψη ελέγχου από τις αρμόδιες αρχές ([3]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι συμβατή με την Οδηγία 98/2008/ΕΚ, η διάκριση που υφίσταται στην ΚΥΑ 36259/2010 ως προς την υποχρέωση διαχείρισης των ΑΕΚΚ, μεταξύ Δημόσιων και Ιδιωτικών έργων;

2. Τα χώματα και οι πέτρες που εκσκάπτονται κατά την διαδικασία κατασκευής Δημοσίων Έργων, αποτελούν «Απόβλητα» υπό την έννοια της Οδηγίας 98/2008/ΕΚ; Αν ναι, είναι συμβατή με την Οδηγία 98/2008/ΕΚ η εγκύκλιος 4834/2013 δεδομένου ότι εξαιρεί από την υποχρέωση εναλλακτικής διαχείρισης, την περίσσεια εκσκαφών από Δημόσια έργα;

3. Γνωρίζει αντίστοιχες εξαιρέσεις (αποχαρακτηρισμό Αποβλήτων Εκσκαφών από Δημόσια Έργα) που υφίστανται σε άλλο κράτος μέλος;

4. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να συμβάλει στην εκπόνηση πιο πλήρων και ακριβών αναφορών σχετικά με την παραγωγή και ανακύκλωση ΑΕΚΚ σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη;

5. Θα ήταν διατεθειμένη να συνεργαστεί με τις ελληνικές αρχές προκειμένου να συμβάλει στη διαμόρφωση κινήτρων που θα προωθήσουν την επαναχρησιμοποίηση δευτερογενών υλικών τα οποία προέρχονται από την επεξεργασία ΑΕΚΚ;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnikon εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Ελλάδα κοινοποίησε στην Επιτροπή τον Νόμο 4042/2012 ([4]) με τον οποίο μεταφέρεται στο εθνικό δίκαιο η οδηγία 2008/98/ΕΚ ([5]) για τα απόβλητα (οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα απόβλητα). Με τον εν λόγω νόμο, μεταφέρονται στην εθνική έννομη τάξη οι διατάξεις της οδηγίας πλαισίου κατά τρόπο πλήρη και αποτελεσματικό. Η Επιτροπή δεν είχε γνώση της ερμηνευτικής εγκυκλίου στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Ωστόσο, η εγκύκλιος αυτή αναφέρεται σε μια απόφαση του 2010 που είναι προγενέστερη του εθνικού νόμου μεταφοράς και έναντι της οποίας υπερισχύει ο εν λόγω νόμος.

Σε κάθε περίπτωση, οι νομικές υποχρεώσεις που προβλέπει η οδηγία πλαίσιο δεν κάνουν διάκριση μεταξύ των αποβλήτων που παράγονται από τον δημόσιο ή τον ιδιωτικό τομέα . Το χώμα και οι πέτρες που εκσκάπτονται κατά τη διαδικασία κατασκευής δημοσίων (και ιδιωτικών) έργων αποτελούν απόβλητα εάν ο κάτοχος των υλικών αυτών τα απορρίπτει ή προτίθεται ή υποχρεούται να τα απορρίψει σύμφωνα με τον ορισμό των αποβλήτων που προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 1 της οδηγίας πλαισίου. Αν χαρακτηριστούν απόβλητα, πρέπει να υποβληθούν σε διαδικασία ανάκτησης, σύμφωνα με την ιεράρχηση των αποβλήτων, έτσι ώστε να συνεισφέρουν στο στόχο του 70 % που προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 11 παράγραφος 2 της οδηγίας πλαισίου· ή, ως τελευταία λύση, να αποτεθούν ασφαλώς.

([1]) http://www.eoan.gr/uploads/temp/AEKK.pdf
([2]) http://www.eoan.gr/uploads/files/248992903d1ee9261e509361b9e71fa4ee315a1a.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/2011_CDW_Report.pdf
([4]) Νόμος για την ποινική προστασία του περιβάλλοντος — Εναρμόνιση με την οδηγία 2008/99/ΕΚ — Πλαίσιο παραγωγής και διαχείρισης αποβλήτων — Εναρμόνιση με την οδηγία 2008/98/ΕΚ — Πλαίσιο παραγωγής και διαχείρισης αποβλήτων — Εναρμόνιση με την οδηγία 2008/98/ΕΚ — Ρύθμιση θεμάτων Υπουργείου Περιβάλλοντος, Ενέργειας και Κλιματικής Αλλαγής (Εφημερίδα της Κυβερνήσεως αρ. φύλλου 24/13.02.2012).
([5]) ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.

Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τέτοιες εξαιρέσεις σε άλλα κράτη μέλη. Μέχρι τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2013, τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να υποβάλουν έκθεση σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας πλαισίου, καθώς και για την προσέγγιση προς τον προαναφερθέντα στόχο. Με βάση τις πληροφορίες που θα λάβει από τα κράτη μέλη, η Επιτροπή θα δημοσιεύει έκθεση εφαρμογής έως τις 12 Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

Η Επιτροπή παρέχει ήδη τεχνική βοήθεια προς την Ελλάδα σε θέματα αποβλήτων μέσω της ομάδας δράσης για την Ελλάδα, που συστάθηκε το 2011. Η αξιοποίηση και ανάκτηση των αποβλήτων αντί της απόρριψής τους σε χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής είναι μία από τις κύριες προτεραιότητες για την Ελλάδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003757/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Reclassification of excavation waste from public works

The part of Directive 2008/98/EC relating to excavation, construction and demolition waste was transposed into Greek law under Joint Ministerial Decision 36259/1757/E103/2010 (Government Gazette II/1312) ([1]). Article 7 of that Joint Ministerial Decision makes a distinction in terms of how producers/holders of excavation, construction and demolition waste are required to comply, depending on whether the waste is produced from private works or from public works. On 25 January 2013, the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change made a further distinction for excavation, construction and demolition waste from public works. It published an explanatory circular no 4834/2013 ([2]), which states: 'According to the above, the provisions of the Joint Ministerial Decision do not imply that there is any obligation to manage excavation waste from public works'. Greece is one of the Member States of the EU with very low per capita rates of excavation, construction and demolition waste (0.37 tonnes compared with a European average of 0.94), which the Directorate General of Environment considers is due to a lack of control by the competent authorities ([3]).

1. Is the distinction between private and public works in Joint Ministerial Decision 36259/2010 compatible with Directive 2008/98/EC in terms of the obligation to manage excavation, construction and demolition waste?

2. Do soil and rocks excavated during the construction of public works constitute 'waste' within the meaning of Directive 2008/98/EC? If so, is circular 4834/2013 compatible with Directive 2008/98/EC, given that it exempts excavation waste from public works from compulsory alternative management?

3. Does it know of similar exemptions (reclassification of excavation waste from public works) in any other Member States?

4. What measures does it intend to take in order to help draft more complete and accurate reports on the production and recycling of excavation, construction and demolition waste in all the Member States?

5. Would it be prepared to cooperate with the Greek authorities in order to help design incentives to encourage recycling of secondary materials obtained from processing excavation, construction and demolition waste?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

Greece notified to the Commission Law 4042/2012 ([4]) which transposes Directive 2008/98/EC ([5]) on waste (Waste Framework Directive — WFD). This Law fully and effectively transposes the provisions of the WFD in the national legal order. The Commission was not aware of the explanatory circular referred to by the Honorable Member. However, this circular refers to a Decision from 2010 which predates the national transposition Law and holds a lower legal rank.

In any case, the legal obligations laid down in the WFD do not distinguish between publicly or privately generated wastes. Soil and rocks excavated during the construction of public (and private) works constitute waste if the holder of such material discards or intends or is required to discard in line with the definition of waste provided in Article 3(1) of the WFD. Should it be categorized as waste, it shall undergo a recovery operation in line with the waste hierarchy so as to contribute to the 70% target set out in Article 11(2) of the WFD; or safely disposed of, as the last resort.

The Commission is not aware of such exemptions in other Member States. By September 2013, Member States shall report about the implementation of the WFD, including the approximation to the abovementioned target. Based on the information received from Member States the Commission will publish an implementation report by 12 December 2014.

([1]) http://www.eoan.gr/uploads/temp/AEKK.pdf
([2]) http://www.eoan.gr/uploads/files/248992903d1ee9261e509361b9e71fa4ee315a1a.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/pdf/2011_CDW_Report.pdf
([4]) Law on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law — Harmonisation with Directive 2008/99/EC — Framework for the Production and Management of Waste — Harmonisation with Directive 2008/98/EC — Regulation of various issues of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (OJ 24A/13.2.2012).
([5]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

The Commission is already providing Technical Assistance support to Greece in waste matters through the Task Force for Greece set up in 2011. Diverting waste from landfills in order to be recovered instead is one of the main priorities for Greece.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003758/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Extinderea cerințelor privind etichetarea pentru toate tipurile de carne

Recentul scandal privind produsele din carne de cal vândute drept produse din carne de vită, care a afectat până în prezent 16 state membre și mai multe societăți din industria alimentară, a șocat publicul și a generat preocupări cu privire la lanțurile de aprovizionare cu alimente din UE.

Actuala testare ADN a produselor din carne din întreaga UE, propusă de Comisie, urmărește să evalueze amploarea situației. Cu toate acestea, acest scandal a scos la iveală deficiențe ale legislației privind siguranța alimentară și este probabil să urmeze dezvăluiri ale altor cazuri de fraudă.

De asemenea, este larg acceptat faptul că acest caz fără precedent este mai degrabă o situație de fraudă paneuropeană privind etichetarea decât o chestiune referitoare la sănătatea consumatorilor. Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare, care va intra în vigoare la 13 decembrie 2013, introduce indicarea pe etichetă a „țării de origine" numai pentru carnea proaspătă de porc, pasăre, oaie și capră. Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1760/2000 cuprinde prevederi similare privind etichetarea cărnii de vită și a produselor din carne de vită. Cu toate acestea, aceste regulamente nu se aplică cărnii ca ingredient al produselor prelucrate.

Când intenționează Comisia să ia în calcul extinderea cerințelor existente privind etichetarea pentru toate tipurile de carne și produse din carne, inclusiv pentru carnea ca ingredient al produselor prelucrate?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(6 mai 2013)

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare ([1]), care va intra în vigoare la 13 decembrie 2014, introduce dispoziții privind indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii pentru carnea neprelucrată de ovine, caprine, păsări de curte și porcine, în urma efectuării unei evaluări a impactului și a adoptării de acte de punere în aplicare până la 13 decembrie 2013.

În paralel, Comisia are, de asemenea, obligația de a prezenta Parlamentului European și Consiliului, până la 13 decembrie 2013, un raport asupra necesității de a extinde dispozițiile privind indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii pentru toate tipurile de carne atunci când aceasta este folosită ca ingredient în produsele alimentare. În scopul elaborării raportului menționat, a fost comandat un studiu extern, ale cărui rezultate vor fi finalizate în 2013, la începutul verii. Raportul va fi prezentat în toamna anului 2013.

Comisia are, de asemenea, obligația de a prezenta rapoarte similare asupra necesității de a extinde dispozițiile privind indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii și pentru alte produse alimentare, inclusiv a cărnii neprelucrate, cu excepția cărnii de bovine, porcine, păsări de curte, ovine și caprine, până la 13 decembrie 2014.

Toate aceste rapoarte trebuie să ia în considerare necesitatea informării consumatorului, fezabilitatea impunerii obligativității de a indica originea pe etichetă și o analiză a costurilor și a beneficiilor introducerii unor astfel de măsuri, inclusiv a impactului juridic asupra pieței interne și asupra comerțului internațional.

Pe baza concluziilor rapoartelor menționate, Comisia poate înainta propuneri de modificare a dispozițiilor relevante ale Uniunii sau, după caz, poate adopta noi inițiative, în funcție de sector.

([1]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 25 octombrie 2011 privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare, de modificare a Regulamentelor (CE) nr. 1924/2006 și (CE) nr. 1925/2006 ale Parlamentului European și ale Consiliului și de abrogare a Directivei 87/250/CEE a Comisiei, a Directivei 90/496/CEE a Consiliului, a Directivei 1999/10/CE a Comisiei, a Directivei 2000/13/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului, a Directivelor 2002/67/CE și 2008/5/CE ale Comisiei și a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 608/2004 al Comisiei, JO L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003758/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Extending the labelling requirements for all types of meat

The recent scandal involving horsemeat products sold as beef products, which has so far affected up to 16 Member States and several food companies, shocked the public and raised concerns over the EU's food supply chains.

The current DNA testing of meat products across the EU, proposed by the Commission, seeks to assess the scale of the situation. However, this scandal has revealed weaknesses in food safety legislation, and it is likely that additional cases of fraud will be uncovered.

There is also widespread agreement that this unprecedented case is a pan-European labelling fraud issue, rather than a consumer health issue. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, which will enter into force on 13 December 2013, introduces 'country of origin' labelling only for fresh meat from pigs, poultry, sheep and goats. Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 makes similar provisions for the labelling of beef and beef products. However, these regulations do not apply to meat as an ingredient in processed products.

When will the Commission consider extending the existing labelling requirements for all types of meat and meat products, including meat as an ingredient in processed products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]), which will enter into application on 13 December 2014, introduces mandatory origin labelling for unprocessed sheep, goat, poultry and pig meat, following an impact assessment and the adoption of implementing acts by 13 December 2013.

In parallel, the Commission is also obliged to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the need to extend mandatory origin labelling to meat of all types when used as an ingredient in foods by 13 December 2013. For the purpose of this report, an external study has been commissioned, the results of which will be finalised in early summer 2013. This report will be delivered in Autumn 2013.

The Commission is also obliged to submit similar reports on the need to extend mandatory origin labelling to other foods, including unprocessed meat other than beef, pig, poultry, sheep and goat by 13 December 2014.

All these reports must take into account the need for the consumer to be informed, the feasibility of providing mandatory origin labelling and an analysis of the costs and benefits of the introduction of such measures, including the legal impact on the internal market and on international trade.

Based on the conclusions of such reports, the Commission may submit proposals to modify the relevant Union provisions or may take new initiatives, where appropriate, on a sectoral basis.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003759/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Extinderea cerințelor privind etichetarea pentru produsele din carne

Recentul scandal fără precedent privind carnea de cal a generat preocupări majore la nivelul UE, cu toate că este general acceptat faptul că a fost vorba mai degrabă de o situație de fraudă paneuropeană privind etichetarea decât de o chestiune referitoare la sănătatea consumatorilor.

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare, care va intra în vigoare la 13 decembrie 2013, introduce indicarea pe etichetă a „țării de origine" numai pentru carnea proaspătă de porc, pasăre, oaie și capră. Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1760/2000 cuprinde prevederi similare privind etichetarea cărnii de vită și a produselor din carne de vită.

1. De ce numai indicarea pe etichetă a țării de origine este obligatorie, în timp ce cerințele privind indicarea țărilor de prelucrare, de ambalare și de distribuție pe etichetă lipsesc pe parcursul întregului lanț de aprovizionare?

2. Deși extinderea normelor privind etichetarea va crește gradul de prevenire a fraudelor, este posibil ca producătorii de produse alimentare să i se opună, pe motiv că ar genera costuri mai ridicate. Ce măsuri va lua Comisia pentru a se asigura că aceste costuri nu sunt suportate de consumatori?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(15 mai 2013)

1. Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare ([1]), care va intra în vigoare la 13 decembrie 2014, stabilește informațiile care trebuie comunicate consumatorului final privind identitatea, compoziția, proprietățile sau alte caracteristici ale alimentelor, în scopul de a face alegeri în cunoștință de cauză. Cu toate acestea, informațiile privind ambalarea și distribuția produselor alimentare, deși relevante pentru trasabilitate din punctul de vedere al operatorilor din sectorul alimentar și al autorităților de control competente, nu sunt relevante pentru consumatorul final pentru a face alegeri în cunoștință de cauză.

2. Indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii nu este un instrument de prevenire a fraudelor din partea operatorilor răuvoitori. Prezentul scandal s-ar fi putut produce, chiar dacă indicarea pe etichetă a originii ar fi fost obligatorie pentru produsele alimentare în cauză. Regulamentul ICPA introduce dispoziții privind indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii pentru carnea neprelucrată de ovine, caprine, păsări de curte și porcine, în urma efectuării unei evaluări a impactului și a adoptării de acte de punere în aplicare până la 13 decembrie 2013. Evaluarea impactului menționată anterior, precum și orice evaluare a impactului care însoțește propunerile legislative și nelegislative, vor evalua potențialele consecințe economice, sociale și de mediu ale opțiunilor avute în vedere, inclusiv problema cheltuielilor.

([1]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 25 octombrie 2011 privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare, de modificare a Regulamentelor (CE) nr. 1924/2006 și (CE) nr. 1925/2006 ale Parlamentului European și ale Consiliului și de abrogare a Directivei 87/250/CEE a Comisiei, a Directivei 90/496/CEE a Consiliului, a Directivei 1999/10/CE a Comisiei, a Directivei 2000/13/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului, a Directivelor 2002/67/CE și 2008/5/CE ale Comisiei și a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 608/2004 al Comisiei, JO L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003759/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Extending the labelling requirements for meat products

The recent unprecedented horsemeat scandal caused great concern at EU level, although it is generally agreed that this was a pan-European labelling fraud issue rather than a consumer health issue.

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, which will enter into force on 13 December 2013, introduces 'country of origin' labelling only for fresh meat from pigs, poultry, sheep and goats. Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 makes similar provisions for the labelling of beef and beef products.

1. Why is only the country of origin compulsory in labelling, while labelling requirements are missing throughout the whole supply chain for the countries of processing, packaging and distribution?

2. While extending the labelling rules will increase the prevention of fraud, it may also be opposed by food manufacturers on the grounds that it leads to higher costs. How will the Commission ensure that such costs are not borne by consumers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

1. Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers, ([1]) which will enter into application on 13 December 2014, sets out the information that is to be communicated to the final consumer on the identity, composition, properties or other characteristics of foods in order to make informed choices. However information concerning packaging and distribution of foods, although relevant for traceability purposes as far as food business operators and competent control authorities are concerned, is not relevant for the final consumer to make informed choices.

2. Mandatory origin labelling is not a tool to prevent fraud by malicious operators. The present scandal could have occurred, even if origin labelling was mandatory for the foods in question. The FIC Regulation introduces mandatory origin labelling for unprocessed sheep, goat, poultry and pig meat, following an impact assessment and the adoption of implementing acts by 13 December 2013. The latter impact assessment, as well as any impact assessment accompanying legislative and non-legislative proposals, will assess the potential economic, social and environmental consequences of the options considered, including the issue of costs.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003760/13
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 — fines for veterinarians who approve deficient journey logs

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires that animals transported for more than eight hours from one country to another be accompanied by a journey log. The journey log shall, among other things, contain details of the planning of the journey, i.e. the estimated journey time and the scheduled 24 hour rest stops at control posts if the length of the journey so requires. Furthermore, Article 14 of the regulation requires the competent authority, i.e. the veterinarian at the place of departure, to verify that the journey log indicates planning which 'is realistic and indicates compliance with this regulation'. Only if the outcome of this verification is satisfactory is the competent veterinarian allowed to stamp the journey log and by doing so approve the transport.

Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspection reports published in 2009 and 2010 concerning 16 missions to 12 Member States, as well as various reports by NGOs, show that officials in the Member States often do not properly check on journey logs. In particular:

— Member State authorities accept journey logs with unrealistically short estimated journey times; as a result the obligatory rest stops for very long journeys are neither planned nor carried out;

— important parts of the journey log are often left blank, despite which officials stamp it as being satisfactory.

Obviously, the approval of journey logs with deficient planning of the transport has very negative consequences on the protection of animals during transport.

1. Does the Commission know if the individual EU Member States have established fines applied to veterinarians who approve deficient journey logs? If so, can the Commission inform Parliament what fines are incurred for this violation in the 27 Member States?

2. If the answer to the above question is yes, does the Commission have information about the number of fines applied in practice in the Member States to veterinarians who have approved deficient journey logs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003228/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003761/13
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE) e José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Imposição de obstáculos à livre circulação de cidadãos comunitários

O Primeiro-Ministro britânico, David Cameron, anunciou uma série de medidas com o intuito de restringir o acesso de imigrantes, nomeadamente dos que provenham de outros Estados-Membros da União, aos apoios sociais e ao sistema de saúde britânico.

De acordo com a Diretiva 2004/38/CE, qualquer cidadão da UE tem direito a deslocar-se a um outro Estado-Membro munido de um documento de identificação válido. Caso se trate de uma estada superior a 3 meses, esta deverá estar sujeita a certas condições que asseguram que esse cidadão ou exerça uma atividade profissional, ou seja estudante, mas que acima de tudo possa fazer prova de que dispõe de recursos suficientes e de um seguro de doença para não se tornar um encargo para a segurança social do Estado-Membro de acolhimento.

Por outro lado, o Regulamento (UE) n.° 492/2011 garante aos trabalhadores migrantes a possibilidade de exercerem a sua atividade profissional nas mesmas condições que os trabalhadores nacionais, sendo proibido qualquer tipo de discriminação. Os trabalhadores migrantes são, assim, equiparados aos trabalhadores nacionais em todos os domínios, nomeadamente no que diz respeito a poderem beneficiar das mesmas vantagens sociais.

Temos vindo a trabalhar incessantemente no sentido de suprimir eventuais obstáculos, que ainda possam persistir, à livre circulação, valorizando o conteúdo da cidadania europeia. Estas medidas anunciadas pelo Primeiro-Ministro Britânico são, sem dúvida, uma ameaça a esse esforço. Por estas razões, gostaria que a Comissão se pronunciasse sobre a compatibilidade das medidas propostas com a legislação europeia em vigor.

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

Na fase atual, o Reino Unido não comunicou à Comissão quaisquer alterações à sua legislação neste domínio. O direito fundamental à livre circulação garantido pelo direito da União aos cidadãos da União e aos membros da sua família é um dos direitos mais prezados na União Europeia. A Comissão está plenamente empenhada na salvaguarda deste direito e em assegurar que os cidadãos da UE dele usufruem em toda a União

Além disso, relativamente aos direitos dos trabalhadores da UE que exercem o seu direito à livre circulação, em 26 de abril de 2013, a Comissão adotou uma proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa a medidas destinadas a facilitar o exercício dos direitos conferidos aos trabalhadores no contexto da livre circulação de trabalhadores ([1]). Esta proposta tem como objetivo garantir melhor informação e apoio aos trabalhadores da UE que exercem o seu direito à livre circulação no que diz respeito à observância dos seus direitos.

([1]) COM(2013) 236.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003761/13
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE) and José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Imposition of obstacles to freedom of movement for Community citizens

UK Prime Minister David Cameron has announced a series of measures aimed at restricting the access of immigrants, in particular those coming from other EU Member States, to social benefits and the UK health service.

Pursuant to Directive 2004/38/EC, all EU citizens who hold a valid identity document have the right to travel to another Member State. A stay of over three months is subject to certain conditions to ensure that they are employed or self-employed or students but above all that they have sufficient resources and sickness insurance cover to present them from becoming a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State.

On the other hand, Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 guarantees migrant workers the possibility of working under the same conditions as national workers, any form of discrimination being prohibited. Migrant workers are therefore treated in the same way as national workers in all spheres, in particular with regard to entitlement to the same social benefits.

We have been working constantly to remove any remaining obstacles to freedom of movement, thereby enhancing the significance of European citizenship. The measures announced by the UK Prime Minister are undoubtedly a threat to these efforts. We would therefore like the Commission to express an opinion on the compatibility of the proposed measures with existing European legislation.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

At this stage, the United Kingdom has not notified any changes to their legislation in this area to the Commission. The fundamental right of free movement guaranteed by EC law to EU citizens and their family members is one of the most cherished right in the European Union. The Commission is fully committed to safeguarding this right and ensuring that EU citizens can effectively enjoy it across the EU.

Moreover, as regards the rights of EU workers using their right to free movement, on 26 April 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers (COM(2013) 236). This proposal is aimed at ensuring better information and better support for EU workers using their right to free movement as regards enforcement of their rights.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003762/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κρίση και γονιμότητα

Στην τριμηνιαία επισκόπηση της Επιτροπής αναλύονται οι επιπτώσεις της κρίσης στη γονιμότητα. Από το 2009 η γονιμότητα έχει σταματήσει να ανέρχεται και έχει σταθεροποιηθεί σε μέσο όρο μόλις κάτω από 1,6 παιδιά ανά γυναίκα στην ΕΕ των 27. Ο μέσος όρος ηλικίας των γυναικών κατά τον τοκετό συνέχισε να ανέρχεται και έφθασε το όριο των 30 ετών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία μεταξύ των κρατών μελών; Σε ποια κράτη μέλη παρατηρείται η μεγαλύτερη κάμψη, και ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

— Αναμένεται το προσεχές διάστημα να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία αναφορικά με την αντιμετώπιση του συγκεκριμένου προβλήματος, που μακροπρόθεσμα επιβαρύνει ιδιαίτερα το δημογραφικό πρόβλημα της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Το ειδικό συμπληρωματικό τεύχος για τις δημογραφικές τάσεις στην τριμηνιαία επισκόπηση του Μαρτίου του 2013 για την εργασιακή και κοινωνική κατάσταση στην ΕΕ ([1]) παραθέτει την κατανομή του ποσοστού γονιμότητας ανά κράτος μέλος. Το 2011, το συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας στην Ελλάδα ανερχόταν στις 1,42 γεννήσεις ζώντων νεογνών ανά γυναίκα, αποτελώντας το 17ο υψηλότερο ποσοστό στην ΕΕ, κάτω από τον μέσο όρο των 1,57 στην ΕΕ των 27. Η μεγαλύτερη πτώση από το 2010 στο 2011 σημειώθηκε στη Δανία (1,87 σε 1,75), στην Εσθονία και στο Λουξεμβούργο (1,63 έως 1,52 και στις δύο περιπτώσεις). Για τα ίδια έτη αναφοράς, το ποσοστό για την Ελλάδα μειώνεται από 1,51 σε 1,42. Η κατάσταση διαφέρει σημαντικά από το ένα κράτος μέλος στο άλλο, με ορισμένες χώρες να σημειώνουν αύξηση στο συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας (π.χ. η Λιθουανία, όπου το ποσοστό γονιμότητας αυξήθηκε από 1,55 σε 1,76).

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί το δημογραφικό πρόβλημα πολύ σημαντικό, όπως το έκανε σαφές με την ανακοίνωση του 2006 με τίτλο «Το δημογραφικό μέλλον της Ευρώπης — μετατροπή μιας πρόκλησης σε ευκαιρία» ([2]), η οποία διακρίνει πέντε τομείς πολιτικής που έχουν σημασία στην αναχαίτιση της δημογραφικής μείωσης και στην ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού. Το πακέτο κοινωνικών επενδύσεων ([3]) κατατάσσει την πληθυσμιακή αλλαγή μεταξύ των κύριων λόγων αναπροσαρμογής των κοινωνικών δαπανών, προκειμένου να εξασφαλιστεί ότι η οικονομία και το κοινωνικό σύστημα της Ευρώπης θα μπορέσουν να εξακολουθήσουν να υπολογίζουν σε επαρκές ανθρώπινο δυναμικό.

Μελέτες έχουν δείξει ότι οι νεαροί ενήλικοι στην ΕΕ γενικά θα ήθελαν να αποκτήσουν περισσότερα παιδιά από όσα έχουν ([4]). Στο πλαίσιο των αρμοδιοτήτων της, η Επιτροπή ενισχύει την κατανόηση των δυσκολιών (π.χ. μέσω του έργου REPRO ([5])) και προωθεί την παροχή ευκαιριών για τους νεαρούς ενηλίκους (π.χ. στη δέσμη μέτρων για την απασχόληση των νέων ([6])), τον συνδυασμό επαγγελματικής και ιδιωτικής ζωής (π.χ. την οδηγία για τη γονική άδεια ([7])) την κοινωνική καινοτομία και τις καλές πρακτικές ([8]) στον τομέα αυτό.

([1]) Βλέπε http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes
([2]) Βλέπε COM(2006)571 τελικό της 12 Οκτωβρίου 2006, στη διεύθυνση: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006DC0571:EL:NOT
([3]) Βλέπε «Στοχεύοντας στις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις για την ανάπτυξη και τη συνοχή — συμπεριλαμβανομένης της εφαρμογής του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου (2014-2020)».
([4]) Παραδείγματος χάριν, βλέπε Maria Rita Testa, «Family Sizes in Europe: Evidence from the 2011 Eurobarometer Survey», European Demographic Research Papers, Wittgenstein Centre, Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, στη διεύθυνση: http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf
([5]) Περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη λήψη αποφάσεων γύρω από την τεκνοποίηση (REPRO) στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=el&catId=89&newsId=1731
([7]) Οδηγία 2010/18/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου, της 8ης Μαρτίου 2010, σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της αναθεωρημένης συμφωνίας-πλαισίου για τη γονική άδεια που συνήφθη από τις οργανώσεις BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP και ETUC και με την κατάργηση της οδηγίας 96/34/ΕΚ (ΕΕ L 68 της 18.3.2010).
([8]) Βλέπε τον ιστότοπο της Ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας για την επένδυση στα παιδιά, στη διεύθυνση: http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003762/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Crisis and birth rates

The Commission's quarterly review analyses the impact of the crisis on birth rates. Birth rates stopped rising in 2009 and have levelled out at an average of just 1.6 children per woman in the EU-27. The average age of women giving birth continues to rise and has now reached 30 years.

— Is it in a position to provide comparative data between the Member States? Which Member States present the biggest decline and where does Greece stand?

— Does it expect to take an initiative shortly in order to address this specific problem which, in the long-term, will seriously exacerbate the demographic problem in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The special supplement on demographic trends to the March 2013 EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review ([1]) gives a breakdown of the EU fertility rate by Member State. In 2011 the total fertility rate in Greece was 1.42 live births per woman, the 17th highest in the EU below the EU-27 average of 1.57. The biggest declines from 2010 to 2011 occurred in Denmark (1.87 to 1.75), Estonia and Luxembourg (1.63 to 1.52 in both cases). For the same reference years, the rate for Greece declines from 1.51 to 1.42. The situation varies considerably from Member State to Member State, with increases in the total fertility rate being recorded in some countries (e.g. Lithuania, where it rose from 1.55 to 1.76).

The Commission views demographic challenges as very serious, as it made clear in its 2006 communication 'The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity' ([2]), which highlights five policy areas of importance in curbing demographic decline and developing human resources. The Social Investment Package ([3]) identifies population change as a major reason for adjusting social spending to ensure that Europe's economy and social system can continue counting on adequate human resources.

Studies have shown that young adults in the EU would generally like to have more children than they have ([4]). Within its competence, the Commission fosters an understanding of the difficulties (for instance, via the REPRO project ([5])) and promotes opportunities for young adults (e.g. in the Youth Employment Package ([6])), the reconciliation of work and private life (e.g. the Parental Leave Directive ([7])) and social innovation and good practice ([8]) in this area.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes
([2]) See COM(2006) 571 final of 12 October 2006, at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006DC0571:EN:NOT
([3]) See 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020' (COM(2013) 83 of 20 February 2013).
([4]) For instance, see Maria Rita Testa, 'Family Sizes in Europe: Evidence from the 2011 Eurobarometer Survey', European Demographic Research Papers, Wittgenstein Centre, Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, at: http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf
([5]) Reproductive decision-making in a macro-micro perspective at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1731
([7]) Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC, OJ L 68, 18.3.2010.
([8]) See the website of the European Platform for Investing in Children, at: http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003763/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναλήψεις από τραπεζικές καταθέσεις

Ως συνέχεια των προκρινόμενων πολιτικών για την αντιμετώπιση της τραπεζικής κρίσης στην Κύπρο, εκφράστηκε η ανησυχία για μεγάλες αναλήψεις από τραπεζικές καταθέσεις στην Ευρωζώνη, υψηλότερες του φυσιολογικού μεταφορές καταθέσεων από την περιφέρεια προς τον πυρήνα των χωρών του ευρώ. Στο πλαίσιο της παρακολούθησης των σχετικών εξελίξεων από το Eurogroup, παρατηρεί η Επιτροπή ασυνήθιστα μεγάλες αναλήψεις από τραπεζικές καταθέσεις στην Ευρωζώνη το τελευταίο χρονικό διάστημα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Ιουνίου 2013)

Δεν έχουν παρατηρηθεί ούτε ασυνήθιστα μεγάλες αναλήψεις από τραπεζικές καταθέσεις, ούτε γενική απώλεια της εμπιστοσύνης προς τις τράπεζες της ζώνης του ευρώ.

Τον Φεβρουάριο του 2013, βάσει των δεδομένων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, οι καθαρές εκροές καταθέσεων σε σύγκριση με τον Ιανουάριο του 2013, υπερέβησαν το 0,5% στην Ιρλανδία (-6,4%), την Ελλάδα (-1,8%), τις Κάτω Χώρες (-0,5%) και την Αυστρία (-0,5%). Οι ροές αυτές οφείλονταν σε ενέργειες νομισματικών χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων. Εξαιρουμένων των ροών αυτών και εκείνων της κεντρικής κυβέρνησης, καθαρές εκροές καταθέσεων για τα νοικοκυριά και μηνιαίες καθαρές εκροές καταθέσεων για τις επιχειρήσεις καταγράφηκαν στην Κύπρο (-2,1%), τη Γαλλία (-0,4%) και την Ιρλανδία (-0,1%). Σημαντικές μηνιαίες εισροές σημειώθηκαν στη Μάλτα (3,7%), την Ιταλία (1,6%), τη Φινλανδία (1,1%) και την Εσθονία (0,8%). Τα μηνιαία στοιχεία για τον Μάρτιο του 2013 δεν είναι ακόμη διαθέσιμα στο κοινό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003763/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Withdrawals from bank deposits

Further to the policies already announced for addressing the banking crisis in Cyprus, concern has been expressed about large withdrawals from bank deposits in the euro area, which exceed the normal level of transfers from the peripheral to the core countries in the euro area.

Has the Commission identified unusually large withdrawals from bank deposits in the euro area recently during monitoring of developments by the Eurogroup?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Neither any unusual deposit movements have been identified, nor any general loss of confidence in banks in the euro area.

In February 2013 , based on data from the European Central Bank, deposit net-outflows compared to January 2013 were of more than 0.5% in Ireland (-6.4%), Greece (-1.8%), the Netherlands (-0.5%) and Austria (-0.5%). These flows were driven by movements from monetary financial institutions. Excluding these flows and those from the central government, net-deposit outflows for households and firms monthly net-deposit outflows were recorded in Cyprus (-2.1%), France (-0.4%) and Ireland (-0.1%). Sizable monthly inflows we observed in Malta (3.7%), Italy (1.6%), Finland (1.1%) and Estonia (0.8%). Monthly data for March 2013 are not yet publicly available.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003764/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ζητήματα αναφορικά με το καθεστώς πτωχευμένων τραπεζών

Σύμφωνα με το Ευρωπαϊκό Σύστημα Κεντρικών Τραπεζών, οι πτωχευμένες τράπεζες δεν μπορούν να λάβουν ρευστότητα και, για να την λάβουν, χρειάζονται ποιοτικά εχέγγυα. Ωστόσο, σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο σήμερα δεν υπάρχει ένας σαφής ορισμός κριτηρίων με βάση τα οποία ένα τραπεζικό ίδρυμα κρίνεται ως «πτωχευμένο», άλλωστε η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση σημειώνει ότι δεν υπάρχει αντικειμενικός τρόπος «μέτρησης».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Καθώς απουσιάζει ο αντικειμενικός τρόπος μέτρησης, με ποια κριτήρια η Επιτροπή αξιολογεί το κατά πόσον ένα τραπεζικό ίδρυμα κρίνεται ως πτωχευμένο ή όχι;

— Θεωρεί αναγκαία την κατάρτιση σχετικών κριτηρίων σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Το ενδεδειγμένο επίπεδο κεφαλαιοποίησης των τραπεζών καθορίζεται από τις εθνικές εποπτικές αρχές του τραπεζικού τομέα, οι οποίες είναι επιφορτισμένες με την εφαρμογή των κανόνων προληπτικής εποπτείας στον τομέα αυτόν και την εποπτεία των δραστηριοτήτων των τραπεζών. Συνήθως, λαμβάνονται υπόψη στοιχεία μελλοντικών εξελίξεων, όπως οι αναμενόμενες μελλοντικές ζημίες, στο πλαίσιο των «τεστ αντοχής». Μετά την εκδήλωση της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης, ενισχύθηκε η συνεργασία ανάμεσα στις εθνικές εποπτικές αρχές, ιδίως μέσω φορέων όπως η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών, η οποία συντονίζει τα «τεστ αντοχής» των τραπεζών σε όλη την Ευρώπη.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ) ασκεί με πλήρη ανεξαρτησία τη νομισματική της πολιτική. Η απόφαση για την έγκριση της συμμετοχής αντισυμβαλλομένων σε συνήθεις πράξεις παροχής ρευστότητας, στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωσυστήματος, εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα του διοικητικού συμβουλίου της ΕΚΤ.

Τα κριτήρια για τις κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις των τραπεζών έχουν εναρμονιστεί στο πλαίσιο των συμφωνιών της Βασιλείας. Η συμφωνία ΙΙΙ της Βασιλείας αναμένεται να έχει εφαρμοστεί μέχρι το 2018. Σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, οι διεθνείς αυτές κατευθυντήριες γραμμές αντικατοπτρίζονται στις διαδοχικές προτάσεις σχετικά με την οδηγία IV για τις κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις και τον κανονισμό για τις κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις, που πρόκειται να τεθούν σε ισχύ την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2014.

Η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να υποβάλει την πρότασή της για τον μηχανισμό εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών πριν από το καλοκαίρι του 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003764/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Issues in connection with the status of bankrupt banks

According to the European System of Central Banks, bankrupt banks cannot obtain liquidity and need quality guarantees in order to obtain liquidity. Currently at European level however, there are no clearly defined criteria for identifying 'bankrupt' banks and the European Union has noted, moreover, that there is no objective 'measurement' method.

— As there is no objective measurement method, what criteria does the Commission apply in order to assess if a bank is or is not bankrupt?

— Does it consider that criteria should be laid down at European level?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The proper capitalisation level of banks is established by national banking sector supervisors, who are in charge of enforcing prudential regulations in the area of banking and supervision of banks' activities. It is common to take into account forward-looking elements, such as expected future losses, in the context of stress tests. Cooperation between national supervisors has been enhanced since the financial crisis, in particular through bodies such as the European Banking Authority which is coordinating Europe-wide stress tests.

The ECB acts in full independence in the conduct of the monetary policy. The decision to admit counterparties to regular Euro-system liquidity-providing operations rests with the Governing Council of the ECB.

The criteria of banks' capital requirements are harmonised within the Basel agreements. Basel III is to be implemented by 2018. At European level, these international guidelines are reflected in the successive Capital Requirement Directive IV and the Capital requirements Regulation proposals, to enter into force on 1 January 2014.

The Commission intends to present its proposal for the bank resolution mechanism before summer 2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003765/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις του επικεφαλής του Eurogroup Γ. Ντάισελμπλουμ αναφορικά με τον τρόπο αντιμετώπισης των τραπεζικών κρίσεων στην ΕΕ

Με αφορμή την τραπεζική κρίση στην Κύπρο και τον τρόπο με τον οποίο αποφασίστηκε να αντιμετωπιστεί, ο Πρόεδρος του Eurogroup Γ. Ντάισελμπλουμ ανέφερε ρητώς ότι η περίπτωση της Κύπρου αποτελεί προάγγελο των επόμενων «διασώσεων» εντός της Ευρωζώνης, εννοώντας ότι η Ευρώπη από εδώ και πέρα θα επιλέγει τον δρόμο του «κουρέματος» καταθέσεων, όπου αυτό ενδείκνυται.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Καθώς η συγκεκριμένη πρόταση ασφαλώς δεν βρίσκεται στη γραμμή της ΕΕ για την επίτευξη της τραπεζικής ένωσης, ποια είναι η θέση της;

— Δεδομένου ότι η εκπρόσωπος του αρμόδιου ευρωπαίου επίτροπου για τον χρηματοοικονομικό τομέα Μισέλ Μπαρνιέ δήλωσε την Τρίτη 26.3.2013 ότι «Στην πρόταση της Κομισιόν, η οποία συζητείται, δεν αποκλείεται καταθέσεις άνω των 100 000 ευρώ να μπορούν να γίνονται εργαλεία για να χρησιμοποιούνται σε διασώσεις εκ των ένδον», θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η πρόταση αυτή δεν επηρεάζει την προσπάθεια για την τραπεζική ένωση στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαΐου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές δεν έχουν επιβάλει κάποιο τέλος σε καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ. Όσον αφορά άλλα εργαλεία εξυγίανσης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της μεταχείρισης καταθέσεων άνω των 100 000 ευρώ, θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι, εν αναμονή της θέσπισης της προταθείσας νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ στον τομέα αυτόν, τα κράτη μέλη διαθέτουν ευρεία διακριτική ευχέρεια ως προς τις λεπτομέρειες εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών, εφόσον τηρούν τους κανόνες της Συνθήκης και τον ισχύον παράγωγο δίκαιο της ΕΕ.

Η υπόθεση της Κύπρου κατέδειξε ότι υπάρχει επείγουσα ανάγκη να θεσπιστεί η προταθείσα οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών (BRR), ώστε να επιτευχθεί απόλυτη ασφάλεια δικαίου, καθώς και συνέπεια όσον αφορά το πεδίο εφαρμογής του εργαλείου διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα στην ΕΕ. Όταν η εν λόγω οδηγία τεθεί σε ισχύ, τα κράτη μέλη θα διαθέτουν τα απαραίτητα εργαλεία για να παρεμβαίνουν σε τραπεζικές κρίσεις, περιλαμβανομένου του εργαλείου διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα. Για να ελαχιστοποιηθεί η εμπλοκή των φορολογουμένων σε τραπεζικές κρίσεις, το ενσωματωμένο στο πλαίσιο αυτό εργαλείο διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα θα επιτρέψει την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση τραπεζών, με την εξάλειψη ή την απομείωση των υφιστάμενων συμμετοχών των παλαιών μετόχων και, με τη μείωση των απαιτήσεων των πιστωτών ή τη μετατροπή τους σε μετοχές. Οι καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ θα αποκλείονται ρητά από την εφαρμογή του εργαλείου διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα. Όσον αφορά τη μεταχείριση των καταθέσεων άνω των 100 000 ευρώ στο μελλοντικό πλαίσιο εξυγίανσης, τούτο αποτελεί ακόμη αντικείμενο διαπραγματεύσεων.

Όσον αφορά την Τραπεζική Ένωση, η Επιτροπή πρόκειται να δημοσιεύσει πρόταση για τον Ενιαίο Μηχανισμό Εξυγίανσης το καλοκαίρι του τρέχοντος έτους. Είναι πρόωρο να προδικάσει κανείς τις λεπτομέρειες της σχεδιαζόμενης πρότασης, αλλά τα διδάγματα από την κυπριακή κρίση θα ληφθούν υπόψη κατά τον σχεδιασμό των μελλοντικών στοιχείων της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003765/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Statements by Eurogroup president J. Dijsselbloem on dealing with banking crises in the EU

In the wake of the banking crisis in Cyprus and the way in which it was decided to deal with it, Eurogroup president J. Dijsselbloem expressly stated that the action taken in Cyprus is a forerunner of future 'rescues' within the euro area, meaning that henceforth Europe will opt to apply 'haircuts' to deposits as and where necessary.

— As this particular proposal certainly does not toe the EU line on banking union, what is its position?

— Given that the spokesperson of Michel Barnier, the European Commissioner responsible for the financial sector, stated on Tuesday, 26 March 2013 that: 'In the Commission's proposal, which is under discussion, it is not excluded that deposits over EUR 100 000 could be instruments eligible for bail-in', does the Commission consider that this proposal does not affect efforts to achieve banking union in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities have not imposed any levy on deposits below EUR 100 000. As to other resolution tools, including the treatment of deposits above EUR 100 000, it should be noted that pending the adoption of proposed EU legislation in this field, Member States enjoy a wide margin of discretion as to the modalities of bank resolution as long as they respect Treaty rules and existing EU secondary legislation.

The Cyprus case has highlighted the urgency of adopting the proposed Directive on Bank Recovery and Resolution (BRR) in order to provide full legal certainty and consistency on the scope of application of bail-in in the EU. Once the directive is in place, Member States will have the necessary tools to intervene in banking crisis, including bail-in. To minimise taxpayer involvement in bank crisis, the bail-in tool enshrined in that framework will allow a bank to be recapitalized by wiping out or diluting shareholders and by reducing or converting the claims of creditors into shares. Deposits below EUR 100 000 will be explicitly excluded from the bail-in tool. As regards the treatment of deposits above EUR 100 000 within the future resolution framework, this is still subject to negotiations.

As to the Banking Union, the Commission is to publish a proposal on the Single Resolution Mechanism this summer. It is premature to prejudge details of the planned proposal but any lessons from the Cyprus crisis will be taken into account when designing the future elements of the Banking Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003766/13
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Life-saving defibrillators

Does the EU directive on value added tax insist that Ireland charge a 23% VAT rate on life-saving defibrillators and, if so, can the Commission explain the rationale behind this?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

According to the VAT Directive ([1]), Member States are required to apply a single standard rate, which must be at least 15%. They may also have a maximum of two reduced rates set no lower than 5%, which they may apply, at their discretion, but only to goods and services listed in Annex III to the VAT Directive. As defibrillators, like other medical devices or equipment, are not mentioned in the list at Annex III to the VAT Directive, they cannot be subject to reduced rates.

Ireland has set up its standard VAT rate at the level of 23% which therefore applies to defibrillators.

European acts in the field of taxation have to be adopted by unanimity, which implies that the content of Annex III, which lists the supplies eligible for a reduced rate, was agreed by all the EU Ministers of Finance.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (the VAT Directive) — (OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003767/13
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Subcontractor panel for water metering

Does the Commission consider the requirement for a company to have a minimum annual turnover of EUR 400 000 to be eligible for inclusion on the subcontractor panel for water metering work in Ireland to be anti-competitive towards small companies or individual installers of water meters?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

In applying the EU competition rules, and in particular the rules on abuse of dominance by a dominant undertaking on the market, the Commission takes account of the detailed legal and factual circumstances of the case.

For that reason, without further information, it is not possible to say whether or not the imposition of a minimum annual turnover requirement of EUR 400 000 for including a company on a subcontractor panel for water metering work in Ireland is anticompetitive and in breach of the EU competition rules. However, the mere fact of excluding smaller companies from a downstream market is not necessarily an infringement. And, at any event, there may be legitimate reasons for such a requirement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003768/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(3 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritti umani in Tunisia

La cosiddetta Primavera araba ha portato al potere, nei paesi del quadrante nordafricano, anche gruppi legati all'estremismo e al radicalismo, il cui solo intento è instaurare uno Stato teocratico e confessionale, basato su una visione radicale della sharia islamica.

In Tunisia, in particolare, laddove il clima si è fatto sempre più teso dopo l'assassinio dell'oppositore Chokri Belaid, si verificano da tempo episodi di intimidazione e aggressione di stampo salafita ai danni di chi denuncia l'atmosfera di repressione e di censura che vige ormai nel paese.

Ultimo episodio in ordine di tempo, quello della giovane tunisina Amina Tyler, appartenente al gruppo di protesta Femen. La giovane ha denunciato il clima di terrore in Tunisia mostrandosi sul web, sul social network Facebook, a seno scoperto e intenta a fumare una sigaretta.

La sorte della giovane è appesa a un filo, dato che di lei non si hanno più notizie da giorni e si teme un suo internamento nell'ospedale psichiatrico di Razi Mannouba, a Tunisi. La giovane non è più ricomparsa in pubblico, come raccontato da diverse ONG, tra cui l'Acmid, (Associazione donne marocchine in Italia) e si teme che sia stata sottoposta a elettrochoc.

Nei giorni precedenti, peraltro, hacker riconducibili alla galassia radicalista salafita tunisina avevano oscurato il sito delle Femen, con uno slogan «Vi mozzeremo il seno».

Del caso si sta occupando anche l'Acmid (associazione donne marocchine in Italia), che si è rivolta allo scrivente per perorare la causa presso l'Unione europea.

È possibile sapere:

1. Cosa intende fare la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per tutelare il diritto delle donne tunisine a manifestare il proprio dissenso?

2. Quali azioni saranno intraprese affinché venga assicurata la salvezza della giovane Amina?

3. Quali azioni saranno intraprese affinché la Tunisia venga richiamata al rispetto dei diritti umani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

L'Unione europea segue da vicino il processo di transizione attualmente in corso in Tunisia. L'UE appoggia vivamente la transizione politica della Tunisia verso un sistema democratico dove i diritti fondamentali siano pienamente rispettati, in conformità dei principi e delle convenzioni internazionali.

Ciò avviene attraverso il rafforzamento del dialogo politico, il consolidarsi delle relazioni bilaterali e la messa a disposizione di un sostegno finanziario, sia alle autorità sia, direttamente, alle organizzazioni della società civile.

Per quanto riguarda il caso specifico cui Lei fa riferimento, la delegazione dell'UE a Tunisi è in contatto con Amina Tyler e con il suo difensore. La signora Tyler non ha richiesto alla delegazione nessuna misura particolare di protezione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003768/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Tunisia

In North Africa, the so-called Arab Spring has brought to power certain groups linked to extremism and radicalism, whose sole intention is to install a theocratic and religious state based on a radical concept of sharia law.

In Tunisia in particular, where the atmosphere has grown even more tense since the assassination of opposition leader Chokri Belaid, there have for some time now been incidents of intimidation and aggression by Salafists, targeting those who criticise the climate of repression and censorship which now reigns in the country.

The most recent incident concerns the young Tunisian woman Amina Tyler, a member of the Femen protest group. Ms Tyler denounced the climate of terror in Tunisia by posting photos of herself on Facebook in which she is topless and absorbed in smoking a cigarette.

The young woman's fate is now hanging in the balance, since there has been no news about her for several days, and some fear she has been committed to the Razi Mannouba psychiatric hospital in Tunis. According to various NGOs including ACMID, the association of Moroccan women in Italy, she has not reappeared in public and there are fears that she may have been subjected to electric shock treatment.

Moreover, a few days before this episode, hackers from the radical Salafist movement in Tunisia had attacked the Femen website and replaced it with a slogan reading 'We will cut your breasts'.

ACMID is also looking into this, and contacted me to plead the case to the European Union.

Is it possible to know:

1. What the Vice-President/High Representative intends to do to protect the right of Tunisian women to show their dissent?

2. What action will be taken to guarantee the safety of Amina Tyler?

3. What action will be taken in order to call on Tunisia to respect human rights?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The European Union is closely following the ongoing transition process in Tunisia. The EU strongly supports the political transformation of Tunisia towards a democratic system where fundamental rights are fully respected, in conformity with International Conventions and principles.

This is done through a reinforced political dialogue, the strengthening of bilateral relations and the provision of financial support, both to the authorities and to civil society organisations directly.

With regard to the specific case you are referring to, the EU Delegation in Tunis is in contact with Ms Amina Tyler and her lawyer; Ms Tyler has not requested to the Delegation any specific protection measure.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003769/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Análise sobre a aplicação do artigo 349.° do TFUE

Considerando o seguinte:

O Comité Económico e Social adotou, a 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As Regiões Ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

No seu documento, o Comité Económico e Social apela a uma revisão das políticas de concorrência, das pescas, da contratação pública e do ambiente, de modo a ter em conta as realidades geográficas e climáticas específicas às RUP e a adaptar as disposições destas políticas de acordo com estas realidades;

Neste contexto, o Comité Económico e Social convida a Comissão Europeia a elaborar e a publicar uma análise aprofundada sobre a aplicação do artigo 349.° do TFUE, considerando que as reticências atuais da Comissão Europeia em aplicar o artigo referido parecem ser pouco justificáveis face ao disposto no Tratado;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Concorda com a afirmação de que a Comissão tem sido reticente na aplicação do artigo 349.° TFUE?

2. Pretende elaborar e publicar a análise solicitada sobre a aplicação do artigo 349.° do TFUE?

3. Em caso afirmativo, para quando prevê o início do estudo, a sua conclusão e a sua publicação?

4. Como pode tal estudo contribuir para uma melhor aplicação das políticas europeias nas RUP e para uma melhor aplicação na prática do artigo 349.° TFUE? Avançará, nesse estudo, com exemplos práticos e propostas concretas sobre as principais questões a ser melhoradas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(3 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão teve em conta, sob diversas formas, a situação específica das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP). Esta abordagem não se limita ao domínio de aplicação do artigo 349.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia (TFUE), ou seja, a medidas que derroguem as regras e os princípios consagrados nos Tratados ([1]). Em vez disso, várias iniciativas que não implicam esse tipo de derrogação e, por conseguinte, baseadas nos artigos setoriais do TFUE (agricultura, pesca, transportes, política de coesão, etc.) mostram que o facto de não se utilizar o artigo 349.° como base jurídica para cada medida específica para as RUP não impediu as instituições da UE de desenvolverem uma estratégia *ad hoc* para essas regiões. Por exemplo, no caso da política de coesão da União, tais medidas específicas para as RUP estão previstas na proposta relativa ao regulamento que estabelece disposições comuns para os Fundos Estruturais e os Fundos de Investimento (por exemplo, 85 % de taxa de cofinanciamento, independentemente do PIB) ou as indicadas na proposta de regulamento relativo à cooperação territorial europeia no âmbito do FEDER (por exemplo, dotação específica para as RUP ou a percentagem mais elevada, 30 %, do montante total afetado ao abrigo de programas de cooperação, que pode ser gasto em operações fora da UE).

Por conseguinte, a Comissão não considera que tenha estado «silenciosa» sobre a aplicação do artigo 349.° do TFUE. Sempre que considerou necessário, a Comissão propôs medidas concretas para as RUP com base no referido artigo, e continuará a fazê-lo. Ao mesmo tempo, a Comissão deve certificar-se de que quaisquer medidas específicas no que se refere às RUP são proporcionais às desvantagens que pretendem compensar. Tal aplica-se a qualquer medida deste tipo, independentemente de ser ou não baseada no artigo 349.° do TFUE.

([1]) Tais como os regimes fiscais do «octroi de mer» no que se refere às RUP francesas ou o AIEM para as Canárias, exclusivamente baseados no artigo 349.° do TFUE. Existem outros exemplos de atos legais em que o artigo 349.° do TFUE tem sido utilizado como base jurídica, juntamente com o respetivo artigo setorial, como o Regulamento (UE) n.° 228/2013 (POSEI agrícola) ou o Regulamento FEDER n.° 1080/2006, uma vez que incluem, nomeadamente, medidas específicas que são consideradas derrogações ao Tratado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003769/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Analysis of the application of Article 349 TFEU

Given that:

On 20 March 2013 the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In its opinion the Committee calls for a review of policies on competition, fisheries, public procurement and the environment, so as to take account of the ORs' specific geographical and climatic circumstances;

In that connection, the Committee calls on the European Commission to draw up and publish an analysis of the application of Article 349 TFEU, taking the view that, given the text of the Treaty, the European Commission's current silence on these issues is not really justified,

I would ask the Commission:

1. Does it agree that it has been silent on the application of Article 349 TFEU?

2. Is it planning to draw up and publish an analysis of the application of Article 349 TFEU?

3. If so, when is the analysis to be begun, concluded and published?

4. How can such an analysis help improve the implementation of European policies in the ORs and the practical application of Article 349 TFEU? Will the Commission put forward practical examples and concrete proposals in that analysis regarding the main points to be improved?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission has taken account, in various ways, of the outermost regions' (ORs) specific situation. This approach is not confined to the area of application of Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), i.e. to measures derogating from the rules and principles enshrined in the Treaties ([1]). Rather, various initiatives not implying such derogation and, therefore, based on the sectoral articles of the TFEU (agriculture, fisheries, transport, cohesion policy etc.) show that the fact of not using Article 349 as a legal basis for every specific measure for the ORs has not prevented the EU institutions from developing an ad hoc strategy towards these regions. For example, in case of the Union cohesion policy, such specific measures for the ORs are foreseen in the proposal for a Common Provisions Regulation of the European structural and investment funds (e.g. 85% of co-financing rate regardless of the GDP) or those contained in the proposal for Regulation on the European territorial cooperation under the ERDF (e.g. specific allocation for the ORs or the highest percentage, 30%, of the total amount allocated under cooperation programmes that may be spent on operations outside the EU).

Therefore, the Commission does not consider that it has been 'silent' on the application of Article 349 TFEU. Every time it has considered it necessary, it has proposed specific measures for the ORs on the basis of this Article and it will continue to do so. At the same time, the Commission must make sure that any specific measures in regard to the ORs are proportional to the handicap they intend to offset. This applies to any such measure, whether or not it is based on Article 349 TFEU.

([1]) Such as the tax regimes of the 'octroi de mer' for the French ORs or the AIEM for the Canaries, which are exclusively based on Article 349 TFEU. There are other examples of legal acts for which Article 349 TFEU has been used as legal basis together with the respective sectoral Article, such as Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 (agricultural POSEI) or the ERDF Regulation No 1080/2006, since they contain, *inter alia*, particular measures that are considered to be derogations from the Treaty.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003770/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Associação dos representantes das RUP ao diálogo estabelecido pela Comissão no quadro dos APE

Considerando o seguinte:

O Comité Económico e Social adotou, a 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As Regiões Ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

No seu parecer, o Comité Económico e Social afirma apoiar a organização de um diálogo estruturado entre as sociedades civis das RUP e as dos seus países vizinhos (América Latina, Oceano Atlântico, Caraíbas e Oceano Índico), nomeadamente através da associação dos representantes das RUP ao diálogo estabelecido pela Comissão Europeia no quadro dos acordos de parceria económica;

Neste contexto, o Comité Económico e Social apoia a criação de comités de acompanhamento com a sociedade civil, no âmbito de todos os acordos de parceria económica, e reivindica a participação das RUP nos comités deste género que lhes digam respeito;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como vê a possibilidade da associação dos representantes das RUP ao diálogo estabelecido pela Comissão Europeia no quadro dos acordos de parceria económica?

2. Qual a viabilidade da criação de comités de acompanhamento com a sociedade civil, no âmbito de todos os acordos de parceria económica, com a participação das RUP nos comités deste género que lhes digam respeito?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia prevê que a melhor forma de diálogo com a sociedade civil terá lugar no âmbito dos acordos de parceria económica (APE) regionais, que ainda se encontram em fase de negociação em todas as regiões ACP, com exceção das Caraíbas. Na região das Caraíbas, o APE Cariforum-UE oferece um exemplo claro do diálogo possível no âmbito dos APE. Cria quatro organismos, com vista a: um diálogo ministerial no Conselho Conjunto APE; reuniões de altos funcionários no Comité conjunto de Comércio e Desenvolvimento; um diálogo parlamentar no Comité Parlamentar conjunto; e um diálogo da sociedade civil no Comité Consultivo conjunto. As regiões ultraperiféricas estão envolvidas nos quatro organismos, na medida em que: os Estados-Membros a que pertencem são membros do Conselho e do Comité de Comércio e Desenvolvimento, e podem decidir a sua própria representação; o Comité Parlamentar inclui atualmente um membro do Parlamento Europeu de uma região ultraperiférica; e o Comité Consultivo inclui também uma organização de uma região ultraperiférica. Neste contexto, não compete, por isso, à Comissão Europeia estabelecer estes diálogos nem decidir sobre a participação das regiões ultraperiféricas.

A viabilidade dos comités de acompanhamento sugerida pelo Comité Económico e Social deverá ser avaliada ulteriormente à luz da experiência adquirida através das referidas entidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003770/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Participation of representatives of the ORs in the dialogue set up by the Commission under the EPAs

Given that:

On 20 March 2013 the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In its opinion the Committee supports establishing a structured dialogue between civil society in the ORs and in the countries of their respective neighbourhoods (i.e. Latin America, the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean or the Indian Ocean, as the case may be), involving the participation of representatives of the ORs in the dialogue set up by the European Commission under the Economic Partnership Agreements;

In that connection, the Committee is in favour of creating monitoring committees involving civil society under all the Economic Partnership Agreements, and calls for the participation of the ORs in the committees that concern them,

I would ask the Commission:

1. How does it see the possibility of having representatives of the ORs participate in the dialogue set up by the European Commission under the Economic Partnership Agreements?

2. How viable would it be to create monitoring committees involving civil society under all the Economic Partnership Agreements and have the ORs participate in the committees that concern them?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The European Commission anticipates that the fullest form of dialogue with civil society will take place under the comprehensive regional Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) that are still under negotiation in all ACP regions except the Caribbean. In the Caribbean region, the CARIFORUM-EU EPA offers a clear example of the dialogue possible under EPAs. It creates four bodies allowing for: a ministerial dialogue in the Joint EPA Council; senior-officials meetings in the joint Trade and Development Committee; parliamentary dialogue in the joint Parliamentary Committee; and civil society dialogue in the joint Consultative Committee. The outermost regions are concerned by all four bodies in that: the Member States to which they belong are members of the Council and the Trade and Development Committee, and may decide their own representation; the Parliamentary Committee currently includes one Member of the European Parliament from an outermost region; and the Consultative Committee also includes an organisation from an outermost region. In this context, it is therefore not for the European Commission to set up these dialogues nor to decide on the outermost regions' participation.

The viability of the monitoring committees suggested by the Economic and Social Committee will have to be further assessed in the light of experience gained from the above bodies.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003771/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: «Erasmus Mundus» nas regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP)

Considerando que:

— Comité Económico e Social Europeu adotou, em 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

— no seu parecer, o Comité Económico e Social Europeu considera necessário que a UE assegure aos cidadãos das RUP a igualdade de acesso, tanto na perspetiva de estudos, como na de emprego, destacando que o programa «Erasmus para Todos» não contempla as despesas de transporte inerentes ao seu isolamento, seja para os estudantes que visitam as RUP, seja para os que se deslocam para um outro país da UE, e que, além disso, o mesmo programa «Erasmus para Todos» também não inclui os países terceiros vizinhos das RUP;

— nesse mesmo documento, o Comité Económico e Social Europeu, defende que um «Erasmus Mundus» específico para as RUP deve permitir organizar intercâmbios de jovens com os seus países vizinhos e assegurar, deste modo, a promoção da identidade e da cultura europeia a partir das plataformas europeias;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais as medidas que pretende tomar para fazer face a esta situação de contradição, nomeadamente entre a possibilidade de os jovens e os universitários das RUP tirarem pleno partido dos programas de mobilidade da UE e o facto de a sua geografia ser negada?

2. Pretende avançar com uma proposta de «Erasmus Mundus» específico para as RUP? Em que termos?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2013)

A proposta da Comissão sobre o programa «Erasmus para Todos» 2014-2020 encontra-se atualmente em negociação com o Parlamento e o Conselho. As disposições específicas relativas ao nível das subvenções destinadas à mobilidade dos estudantes e pessoal não constam do texto da proposta. Estas disposições serão descritas no programa de trabalho que será adotado e publicado em simultâneo com o primeiro convite à apresentação de propostas, previsto para o próximo outono.

Todavia, aquilo que se propõe na atual proposta é abrir o programa «Erasmus» aos países terceiros, o que permitiria aos estudantes, incluindo das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP), receber, dentro dos limites do orçamento disponível, uma bolsa de mobilidade para qualquer país participante ou qualquer país terceiro, próximo ou distante. O programa terá em conta a distância da deslocação entre as RUP e o país de destino ao calcular o montante da subvenção. Além disso, o programa apoiará os intercâmbios de jovens e pessoal docente entre as RUP e os respetivos países vizinhos.

Por conseguinte, não está prevista a instituição de um programa «Erasmus Mundus» específico para as RUP, uma vez que uma vasta gama de possibilidades de mobilidade para fins de aprendizagem e de intercâmbio será oferecida no âmbito da componente de ensino superior do futuro programa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003771/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: 'Erasmus Mundus' in the outermost regions (OR)

Taking into account that:

On 20 March 2013 the European Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In that opinion, the European Economic and Social Committee took the view that the EU needs to guarantee equal access to employment or study programmes for citizens living in the ORs, and pointed out that the 'Erasmus for all' programme does not pay the travel costs incurred as a result of their remoteness by students coming to the ORs or travelling to other EU countries, and that furthermore the 'Erasmus for all' programme itself does not take account of third countries that are neighbours of the ORs;

In the same document, the European Economic and Social Committee argued that a specific Erasmus Mundus for ORs should allow exchanges to be arranged for young people with neighbouring countries, thereby using these European outposts to promote European identity and culture;

Will the Commission say:

1. What measures it intends to take to address this situation in which there is a contradiction between young people and academics from ORs being able to participate fully in the EU's mobility programmes and the fact that their geographical location prevents such participation?

2. Whether it is intending to produce a proposal for a specific Erasmus Mundus for ORs, and if so, on what basis?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission proposal for an 'Erasmus for All' Programme 2014-20 is currently under negotiation with Parliament and Council. The specific provisions for the level of grants for student and staff mobility are not addressed in the proposal itself. This will be described in the work programme which will be adopted and published at the same time as the first call for proposals, expected for this autumn.

However, what is proposed in the current proposal is to open Erasmus to third countries, which would allow students, including from the outermost regions (ORs), to receive, within the limits of the available budget, a grant to be mobile towards any participating country or any third country, whether it is close or not. The programme will take into account the travel distance between ORs and the destination country to estimate the grant amount. In addition, the programme will support exchanges for young people and academics between ORs and their neighbouring countries.

As a consequence, it is not intended to create a specific Erasmus Mundus for ORs, as a full range of possibilities for learning mobility and exchange will be offered under the higher education part of the future programme.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003772/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: POSEI para produção agrícola e não agrícola das RUP

Considerando o seguinte:

O Comité Económico e Social adotou, a 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As Regiões Ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

No seu documento, o Comité Económico e Social considera que o instrumento POSEI deve ser avaliado e alargado de forma a abranger toda a produção agrícola e não agrícola das RUP;

A UE deve prosseguir os seus esforços em prol da diversificação e da autossuficiência alimentar das Regiões Ultraperiféricas, para além do açúcar e da banana;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como vê a possibilidade de se alargar o âmbito do instrumento POSEI de forma a abranger toda a produção agrícola e não agrícola das RUP?

2. Está a considerar incluir tal alargamento no âmbito da próxima revisão do regime POSEI?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

No âmbito do atual programa agrícola POSEI (Programa de Opções Específicas para fazer face ao Afastamento e à Insularidade), os Estados-Membros dispõem da possibilidade de incluir todas ou algumas das produções agrícolas enumeradas no anexo I do Tratado, desde que as despesas permaneçam dentro da dotação financeira que lhes foi concedida. De momento, a Comissão não planeia propor outros programas POSEI para produtos não agrícolas.

Não está a ser considerada uma extensão do regime de modo a incluir produtos não agrícolas, mas a possibilidade de alargar o âmbito das ajudas a produtos agrícolas que ainda não beneficiam do apoio do POSEI poderia ser explorada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003772/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: POSEI for agricultural and non-agricultural production in the ORs

Given that:

On 20 March 2013 the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In its opinion the Committee considered that the POSEI instrument should be evaluated and extended to cover all the ORs' products, both agricultural and non-agricultural;

Besides sugar and bananas, the EU should continue to work towards diversification and self sufficiency in food for the outermost regions,

I would ask the Commission:

1. What are its views on the possibility of extending the POSEI instrument to cover all the ORs' products, both agricultural and non-agricultural?

2. Should such an extension be considered in the next review of the POSEI arrangements?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Within the current agricultural POSEI programme, Member States have the possibility to include all or any agricultural productions listed in Annex I of the Treaty, as long as the expenditure remains within the envelope allocated to them. The Commission does not currently have any plans to propose other POSEI programmes for non-agricultural products.

Extension of the scheme to include non-agricultural products is not considered, but the possibility of extending aid to agricultural products which do not already benefit from POSEI support could be explored.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003773/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Revisão das disposições das políticas de concorrência, das pescas, da contratação pública e do ambiente de modo a ter em conta a realidade das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP) (artigo 349.° do TFUE)

Considerando que:

— Comité Económico e Social Europeu adotou, em 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

— no seu documento, o Comité Económico e Social Europeu apela a uma revisão das políticas de concorrência, das pescas, da contratação pública e do ambiente de modo a ter em conta as realidades geográficas e climáticas específicas das RUP e a adaptar as disposições destas políticas a estas realidades;

— neste contexto, o Comité Económico e Social Europeu convida a Comissão Europeia a elaborar e a publicar uma análise aprofundada sobre a aplicação do artigo 349.° do TFUE, considerando que as reticências atuais da Comissão Europeia em aplicar o artigo referido parecem ser pouco justificáveis face ao disposto no Tratado;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Pretende proceder a uma revisão de cada uma das políticas referidas, isto é, das políticas de concorrência, das pescas, da contratação pública e do ambiente, de modo a ter em conta as realidades específicas das RUP?

2. Em caso afirmativo, em relação a quais políticas e em que termos?

3. Quando tenciona apresentar as respetivas propostas legislativas de revisão e adaptação das disposições às realidades das RUP?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(30 de maio de 2013)

O mais recente ponto de vista sobre a forma como a situação específica das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP) deve ser tida em conta na estratégia Europa 2020 é descrito na Comunicação ([1]) da Comissão de junho de 2012. A revisão em curso das diferentes políticas da UE levará em consideração, sempre que necessário, a dimensão das RUP.

No que respeita às regras da concorrência, a Comissão, tendo em conta a disposição específica do TFUE ([2]) em matéria de auxílios estatais para as RUP, pretende garantir que as vantagens de que beneficiam as empresas estabelecidas nas RUP são proporcionais às deficiências com que estas regiões se defrontam e que estas empresas contribuem para o desenvolvimento regional. No que diz respeito à atual revisão das regras em matéria de auxílios estatais com finalidade regional para o período de 2014-2020, a Comissão pretende manter e simplificar este tratamento preferencial das RUP que permite não só auxílios regionais ao funcionamento como ao investimento regional.

([1]) Comunicação da Comissão, «As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: estratégia para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo» — COM(2012) 287 de 20.6.2012.

([2]) O artigo 107.°, n.° 3, alínea a), do TFUE reconhece explicitamente as regiões ultraperiféricas como regiões em que o auxílio estatal pode ser concedido para promover o desenvolvimento económico, tendo em conta a sua situação estrutural, económica e social.

No que diz respeito às pescas, existem diferentes aspetos ([3]) específicos às RUP que são debatidos durante as negociações em curso sobre a reforma da Política Comum da Pesca. No que diz respeito aos contratos públicos, a comunicação acima mencionada define a abordagem da Comissão em relação às RUP sem necessidade de novas propostas legislativas. Relativamente ao ambiente, a Comissão publicou um convite à apresentação de propostas para a execução do terceiro ano da Ação Preparatória BEST a fim de alargar a iniciativa. A estratégia da UE em matéria de adaptação às alterações climáticas classifica as RUP entre as regiões mais vulneráveis ao impacto das alterações climáticas. Os três grandes objetivos da estratégia ([4]) terão de ser aplicados no contexto específico das RUP.

([3]) Tais como maior intensidade financeira especialmente para as RUP, em comparação com outras regiões, ajudas públicas para a renovação da frota nas RUP, prorrogação do regime compensatório dos custos adicionais ou de um regime de acesso especial de exclusividade à zona marítima num raio de 100 milhas.

([4]) Os três principais objetivos são a adoção de estratégias de adaptação, a resistência de todos os investimentos ás alterações climáticas e uma melhor tomada de decisões mais informadas. A implementação será apoiada pelas conclusões e recomendações políticas do estudo em curso sobre o impacto económico das alterações climáticas e das medidas de adaptação nas regiões ultraperiféricas (The economic impact of climate change and adaptation measures in the Outermost Regions), que deverá ser conhecido em junho de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003773/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Review of the provisions of policies on competition, fisheries, public procurement and the environment to take account of the specific circumstances of the outermost regions (OR) (Article 349 TFEU)

Given that:

On 20 March 2013 the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In its document, the Economic and Social Committee called for a review of policies on competition, fisheries, public procurement and the environment to take account of the ORs' specific geographical and climatic circumstances and to adapt the policies to these circumstances;

In this context, the Economic and Social Committee calls on the European Commission to draw up and publish an analysis of the application of Article 349 TFEU, considering that the European Commission's current reluctance to apply that article is not really justified, given the text of the Treaty.

I would ask the Commission:

1. Does it intend to review each of the policies mentioned, i.e. policies on competition, fisheries, public procurement, and the environment to take account of the specific circumstances of the OR?

2. If so, which policies and under what terms?

3. When does it intend to present the relevant legislative proposals for reviewing and adapting the provisions to take account of the specific circumstances of the OR?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission's most recent view on how the specific situation of the outermost regions (ORs) should be taken into account in the Europe 2020 strategy is outlined in its communication ([1]) of June 2012. The ongoing revision of different EU policies will thus consider, where appropriate, the OR dimension.

As regards competition rules, the Commission, taking into account the specific provision in the TFEU ([2]) for the ORs concerning state aid, aims to ensure that the advantages enjoyed by companies established there are proportional to the handicaps that these regions face and that they contribute to regional development. Regarding the current review of state aid rules for regional aid for 2014-2020, the Commission intends to maintain and simplify this preferential treatment of ORs allowing regional operating aid, in addition to regional investment.

([1]) Communication from the Commission 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', COM(2012) 287.

([2]) Article 107(3)(a) TFEU explicitly recognises the outermost regions as regions where state aid can be granted to promote economic development in view of their structural, economic and social situation.

As regards fisheries, there are different aspects ([3]) of the specificities of the ORs that are discussed in the ongoing negotiations on the reform of the common fisheries policy. As regards public procurement, the communication mentioned above has set out the approach of the Commission in relation to the ORs without the need for further legislative proposals. With respect to environment, the Commission has published an open call for tender to implement the third year of the Preparatory Action BEST in order to extend the initiative. The EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change identifies the ORs as among the most vulnerable regions to the impact of climate change. The three key objectives of the strategy ([4]) will have to be applied in the specific context of the ORs.

([3]) Such as a greater financial intensity compared to other regions, ad hoc for the ORs, public aid for the renewal of the fleet in ORs, extension of the regime compensating for additional costs or a special exclusive access regime in the sea area within 100 miles.

([4]) The three key objectives of the strategy are the adoption of adaptation strategies, climate-proofing of all investments and better informed decision-making. The implementation will be supported by the findings and policy recommendations of the current study 'The economic impact of climate change and adaptation measures in the Outermost Regions' due in June 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003774/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Potencial das regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP) em termos de silvicultura

Considerando que:

— Comité Económico e Social adotou, em 20 de março de 2013, um parecer sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: Parceria para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo»;

— no seu documento, o Comité Económico e Social Europeu destaca o potencial das RUP para um cultivo sustentável de árvores tropicais e subtropicais de madeira dura para mercados especialistas, o que considera uma oportunidade que deve ser ponderada nas referidas regiões e nos países e territórios ultramarinos;

— para além da madeira, as florestas tropicais e subtropicais constituem um ambiente ideal para o cultivo de plantas raras para a utilização nos setores da medicina e dos produtos cosméticos; que a madeira proveniente da silvicultura tropical e subtropical é uma atividade que proporciona, a longo prazo, excelentes oportunidades para que estas regiões tirem partido de mercados altamente lucrativos, que necessitam do acesso a essas plantas e madeiras raras;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como pode ser apoiado o cultivo sustentável de árvores tropicais e subtropicais de madeira dura nas RUP para mercados especialistas?

2. Como pode ser incentivado o cultivo de plantas raras para a utilização nos setores da medicina e dos produtos cosméticos?

3. Considera que a madeira proveniente da silvicultura tropical e subtropical é uma atividade que proporciona, a longo prazo, oportunidades para que as RUP tirem partido de mercados altamente lucrativos?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

Os programas de desenvolvimento rural oferecem a possibilidade de várias medidas de apoio no âmbito do segundo pilar da política agrícola comum.

O programa POSEI para a agricultura nas regiões ultraperiféricas dá aos Estados-Membros envolvidos a oportunidade de apresentarem programas que definem a produção agrícola a apoiar, desde que os produtos em questão constem do anexo I do Tratado. As plantas raras para utilização nos setores da medicina e dos produtos cosméticos inserem-se nesta categoria — na realidade, há já Estados-Membros que concedem incentivos à sua produção.

A Comissão entende que este domínio deve ser sobretudo explorado pelas autoridades nacionais ou locais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003774/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 April 2013)

Subject: Outermost regions of the European Union (ORs) with regard to forestry

Given that:

On 20 March 2013 the Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the Commission communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth';

In its opinion the Committee pointed to the potential for growing sustainable specialist tropical and sub-tropical hardwoods as an opportunity that should be considered in the Outermost Regions and the Overseas Countries and Territories;

In addition to wood, tropical and subtropical forests provide an ideal environment for growing rare plants for use in medicine and cosmetics; wood from tropical and subtropical forestry offers a huge long-term opportunity for these regions to capitalise on highly profitable markets that require access to these rare woods and plants,

I would ask the Commission:

1. How can support be provided for growing sustainable specialist tropical and sub tropical hardwoods?

2. What incentives can be provided for growing rare plants for use in medicine and cosmetics?

3. Does the Commission consider that growing tropical and sub-tropical wood is a long term opportunity for these regions to capitalise on highly profitable markets?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Under the second pillar of the common agricultural policy, the Rural Development Programmes offer several potential support measures.

The POSEI programme for agriculture in the Outermost Regions allows Member States concerned to formulate programmes defining which agricultural productions to support, under the condition that such products be included in Annex I to the Treaty. Rare plants for use in medicine and cosmetics can fall under this category — indeed, some Member States already provide incentives for their production.

The Commission considers that this issue should rather be explored by the national or local authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003775/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: A-frames on EU roads

UK motorists are being stopped by police when motor-homing with an A-frame in the EU.

We understand that national laws in Spain and Germany prevent one motor vehicle from towing another and we also believe the intent of these national laws is to stop members of the public from recovering broken down vehicles using unsuitable towing methods and that they reflect a desire that this function be performed by an accredited professional towing or vehicle recovery company.

We understand that the UK has signed the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Vienna Convention on Road Traffic but has not ratified it and that Spain has not signed it. The EU has previously pointed out that this instrument is a UN convention, so how does the legal framework for visiting vehicles operate in the EU?

Under what legal instrument may a vehicle in international traffic temporarily visit another EU Member State without requiring a local vehicle excise and vehicle test certificate?

The UK vehicle registration authority (DoT) believes that a car attached to an A-frame constitutes a trailer under UK legislation. As such, any A-framed vehicle with a maximum combined axle mass of between 750 kg and 3 500 kg will be classed as an O2 trailer when towed in this way — providing all relevant provisions of the UK Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1078) as amended (C&U) and Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989 (SI 1989/1796) as amended (RVLR) are met.

Why, therefore, do German and Spanish police stop UK vehicles in international traffic and not recognise their status as a legally accepted UK combination?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2013)

The Commission would like refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-4130/2012 and P-299/2012 ([1]).

The use of vehicle combinations consisting of motorhomes towing a passenger car with an A-frame in international traffic is not regulated under Union law. Therfore it is the competence of the individual Member States to regulate, under respect of international agreements, which types of vehicle circulations may circulate on public roads and to enforce the legislation.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003776/13
an den Rat
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4. April 2013)

Betrifft: EZBS/EZB/Eurosystem: TARGET2 — System und Sicherung

Durch die anhaltenden starken Leistungsbilanzdefizite einiger Mitglieder im Euro-Währungs-Raum haben sich in den vergangenen Jahren gewaltige Mengen an TARGET2-Salden für einzelne Euro-Mitgliedsländer ergeben.

Der Sinn von TARGET2 war ein System zu installieren, welches den Zahlungsverkehr der nationalen Zentralbanken (ZB) des Euroraums unterstützt. Faktisch wurde das System in den letzten vier bis fünf Jahren aber dazu genutzt, um eine alternative Refinanzierungsmöglichkeit der nationalen ZB als Ersatz zum privaten Kapitalmarkt zu haben. Eine Reihe elementarer Schwächen prägt das TARGET2-System, die maßgeblich für die Explosion der T2-Salden im Rahmen der starken Zahlungsbilanzkrise (Kapitalmangel, Kapitalflucht) der letzten vier Jahre in den südlichen Ländern der Währungsunion waren. Die drei oft zitierten Begründungen zur Unbedenklichkeit dieser gewaltigen Salden sind ökonomisch aus vielfältigen Gründen mittlerweile nicht mehr haltbar.

Der Rat und das Parlament der EU haben durch Artikel129 AEUV, Absatz 3 das Recht, eine Reihe von Artikeln der Satzung der EZSB zu ändern. Zu diesen Artikeln gehören auch Artikel 17, 22 und 23, auf die sich der Beschluss der EZB (EZB/2007/7) zu den Bedingungen von TARGET2 stützt. Insbesondere Artikel 22 verweist auf die Schaffung von Zahlungssystemen, wobei deren Zweck eindeutig nicht als dauerhaftes Refinanzierungsmittel zwischen nationalen Notenbanken dargestellt ist.

Aus diesem Sachverhalt ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Welche Gefahr sieht der Rat in der Ausgestaltung der TARGET2-Salden zwischen verschiedenen Zentralbanken als reine Buchschuld bzw. ohne regelmäßigen Forderungsausgleich, und welche Gefahr sieht er in der missbräuchlichen Umwandlung von T2-Tageskrediten in unlimitierte T2-Dauerkredite und in der unlimitierten Höhe des möglichen Kredites?

2. Warum ergreift der Rat keine Maßnahmen zur Einführung eines regelmäßigen Tilgungssystems der T2-Salden zwischen den nationalen Zentralbanken, ähnlich dem US-amerikanischen System?

3. Teilt der Rat die Ansicht, dass bei derzeitiger Ausgestaltung des T2-Systems, dieses als ein Mittel zum „unsichtbaren Bailout" südeuropäischen Banken mittels des Eurosystems der Zentralbanken fungieren kann?

4. Ist die Einführung des ESM und anderer „Rettungsmechanismen" auch als Ersatz für die mittlerweile ausgereizten Grenzen des unzweckmäßigen T2-Refinanzierungsmechanismus der Südländer der EU über das Eurosystem der nationalen ZB zu sehen — insbesondere in Anbetracht der mittlerweile erreichten finanziellen Grenzen der deutschen Bundesbank?

Antwort
(28. Mai 2013)

Der Rat weist den Herrn Abgeordneten darauf hin, dass es sich bei TARGET2 um das Echtzeit-Bruttoabwicklungssystem (RTGS-System) handelt, das im Eigentum des Eurosystems steht und von diesem betrieben wird; über TARGET2 werden Zahlungen im Zusammenhang mit geldpolitischen Operationen sowie Transaktionen im Zusammenhang mit anderen Zahlungs- sowie Wertpapierliefer- und -abrechnungssystemen abgewickelt und Innertages-Endgültigkeit angeboten.

Es gibt keine Frist, innerhalb derer Intra-Eurosystem-Forderungen abgewickelt werden müssen.

Außerdem handelt es sich bei TARGET2-Forderungen um Forderungen an die Europäische Zentralbank (EZB), die nicht mit Sicherheiten unterlegt sind.

Veränderungen bei den Intra-Eurosystem-Salden spiegeln die Durchführung geldpolitischer Operationen und die Funktionsweise einer Währungsunion mit Kapitalverkehrsfreiheit innerhalb des gesamten Euro-Währungsgebiets wider und sind nicht auf die Funktionsweise des Zahlungssystems als solches zurückzuführen.

Es sei ferner daran erinnert, dass alle Beschlüsse über die Durchführung der Geldpolitik des Eurosystems und die Verwaltung von TARGET2 von der EZB gefasst werden.

Ganz allgemein sei angemerkt, dass eine Änderung der Satzung des Europäischen Systems der Zentralbanken (ESZB) im Rat nicht erörtert wurde. Der Rat begrüßt die Rolle, die die EZB bisher gespielt hat, und ist zuversichtlich, dass sie ihren Auftrag weiterhin auf Grundlage der im Vertrag verankerten Unabhängigkeit erfüllen wird. Der Rat wird weiterhin seiner im Vertrag niedergelegten Verpflichtung nachkommen, wonach es ihm untersagt ist, die EZB bei der Wahrnehmung ihrer Aufgaben zu beeinflussen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003776/13
to the Council
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: ECBS/ECB/Eurosystem: TARGET2 — system and security

The ongoing significant current account deficits among some members of the euro area have led to huge TARGET2 balances for individual euro area members in recent years.

The purpose of TARGET2 was to install a system that would support the payment and money transfer services of the national central banks in the euro area. The fact is, however, that over the last four to five years, the system has been used as an alternative refinancing option for the national central banks instead of the private capital market. The TARGET2 system features a series of elementary weaknesses that have played a significant role in the explosion of T2 balances as part of the major balance of payments crisis (capital shortages, capital flight) among the southern countries in the monetary union over the last four years. The three arguments often put forward for labelling these huge balances innocuous are now no longer economically tenable for several reasons.

Article 129(3) TFEU entitles the Council and Parliament of the EU to change a number of Articles of the Statute of the ESCB. These Articles include Articles 17, 22 and 23, upon which the ECB's decision concerning the conditions for TARGET2 (ECB/2007/7) are based. In particular, Article 22 refers to the establishment of payment systems, the purpose of which is clearly not to provide permanent refinancing between national banks of issue.

1. What risk does the Council see in structuring the TARGET2 balances between different central banks purely as book debt without regular settlement of receivables, and what risk does it recognise in the wrongful conversion of T2 day-to-day loans into unlimited T2 permanent loans and in the lack of a limit on the possible loans?

2. Why does the Council not take steps to introduce a system of regular repayments of the T2 balances between the national central banks similar to the system used in the United States?

3. Does the Council agree that the current structuring of the T2 system allows it to be used as a means for a 'covert bailout' of Southern European banks using the Eurosystem operated by the central banks?

4. Is the introduction of the ESM and other 'rescue mechanisms' also to be seen as an alternative to the now exhausted limits of the T2 refinancing mechanism for the southern Member States of the EU through the Eurosystem of the national central banks — particularly in view of the fact that the German Bundesbank has how reached its financial limits?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that TARGET2 is the real-time gross settlement (RTGS) system owned and operated by the Eurosystem; it settles payments related to monetary policy operations, as well as transactions related to other payment and securities settlement systems, and provides intraday finality.

There is no set date by which intra-Eurosystem claims need to be settled.

Furthermore, TARGET2 claims are claims on the European Central Bank (ECB) and do not have any collateral associated with them.

The changes in intra-Eurosystem balances reflect the conduct of monetary policy operations and the workings of a monetary union with free movement of capital across the whole euro area, and are not due to the workings of the payment system itself.

It should also be recalled that all decisions about the conduct of Eurosystem monetary policy and management of the TARGET2 are taken by the ECB.

More generally, the Council has not discussed amending the Statute of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB). The Council welcomes the role the ECB has played thus far and has every confidence that it will continue to exercise its mandate, underpinned by the independence enshrined in the Treaty. The Council will continue to respect its Treaty obligation not to seek to influence the ECB in the performance of its responsibilities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003777/13
an den Rat
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4. April 2013)

Betrifft: EZSB/EZB/Eurosystem — Ausgestaltung des Mindestreservesatzes

Im Dezember 2011 hat die EZB in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1358/2011 die Reduktion des Mindestreservesatzes für Einlagen der Kreditinstitute der Mitgliedstaaten bei den nationalen Zentralbanken von 2 % auf 1 % beschlossen. Ganz offensichtlich sollte auf diese Weise die Liquidität südeuropäischer Banken innerhalb der vorherrschenden Zahlungsbilanzkrise unauffällig erhöht (verdoppelt) werden, da nun für zusätzliche 100 EUR Einlage nicht 5 000 EUR, sondern 10 000 EUR elektronisch durch Kreditvergabe geschöpft werden können. Auf diese Weise konnten südeuropäische Banken sodann Kredittilgungen einfacher bedienen und vor der Zahlungsunfähigkeit bewahrt werden.

Wenngleich diese Maßnahme kurzfristig, zum Beispiel kurz nach der Lehmann-Pleite, sinnvoll sein kann, ist ein so lächerlich geringer Mindestreservesatz auf längeren Zeitraum hin sehr gefährlich, und die Beibehaltung beinhaltet ebenso starke inflationäre Gefahren. Sogar bei den Fiat-Geld-Freunden in den USA liegt der Mindestreservesatz bei 10 %, in der VR China bei 30 %. Die oben angesprochene Verordnung gründet auf Artikel 19.1 der ESZB-Satzung, welcher laut Artikel 129 Absatz 3 AEUV im Einflussbereich des Rates und des Parlamentes der EU liegt. Diese Situation führt zu folgenden Fragen:

1. Teilt der Rat die Ansicht, dass die EZB durch diese Maßnahme — ein besonders extremes Beispiel von vielen in der Vergangenheit — eine Prioritätenumkehr ihrer eigentlichen Ordnung vollzogen hat, nämlich erstens, Preisstabilität und zweitens, wirtschaftspolitische Unterstützung?

2. Teilt der Rat die Befürchtungen bezüglich einer deutlich verstärkten Inflationsgefahr durch die Verdoppelung möglicher Schöpfung durch Kredite der nationalen Kreditinstitute?

3. Sieht der Rat — in Anbetracht dieses absurd niedrigen Mindestreservesatzes, der damit verbundenen Inflationsgefahr und der merkwürdigen Rolle, welche die EZB während der Finanzkrise eingenommen hat —, Handlungsbedarf, um deren Glaubwürdigkeit und somit langfristige Preisstabilität wieder herzustellen und um sie auf ihren originären Kurs zurück zu bringen, z. B. durch einen Mindestwert für den Mindestreservesatz in Artikel 19.1, dessen Unterschreitung sodann auch dem EZB-Rat untersagt ist?

4. Wie sieht der Rat die Zukunftsaussichten und die unmittelbare Kollapsgefahr des Eurosystems bei einer neuerlichen Kapitalklemme — vor allem in Anbetracht der bisherigen Anwendung so verzweifelter Maßnahmen durch die betont unabhängige EZB: Die angesprochenen Halbierung des Mindestreservesatzes von 2 % auf 1 % zwecks möglicher Verdoppelung der Liquidität (12/2011) oder der unbegrenzten Aufkauf von Staatsanleihen unter 3 Jahren Laufzeit (9/2012)?

Antwort
(31. Mai 2013)

Der Rat macht den Herrn Abgeordneten darauf aufmerksam, dass der Rat der Europäischen Zentralbank (EZB) am 8. Dezember 2011 Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Kreditvergabe der Banken und der Liquidität des Geldmarkts im Euro-Währungsgebiet angekündigt hat. Eine dieser Maßnahmen bestand darin, den Mindestreservesatz mit Geltung vom 18. Januar 2012 von 2 % auf 1 % zu senken. Am 6. September 2012 hat der EZB-Rat vor dem Hintergrund der angespannten Lage und Unsicherheit auf den Finanzmärkten die Modalitäten dafür festgelegt, an den Sekundärmärkten für Staatsanleihen des Euro-Gebiets unbegrenzte Ankäufe (Outright Monetary Transactions, OMTs) zu tätigen.

Die von der EZB getroffenen Maßnahmen fallen in den Bereich ihrer ausschließlichen Zuständig-keit und stehen im Einklang mit Artikel 3 Absatz 1 Buchstabe c des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union (AEUV), nach dem die EU für *„die Währungspolitik für die Mitglied-staaten, deren Währung der Euro ist“*, ausschließliche Zuständigkeit hat, sowie mit Artikel 282 Absatz 1, nach dem die Verantwortung für diese Aufgabe der EZB übertragen wird. Die EZB und die nationalen Zentralbanken der Mitgliedstaaten, deren Währung der Euro ist, *„betreiben [zusammen] die Währungspolitik der Union“*. Darüber hinaus erlässt die Europäische Zentralbank nach Artikel 282 Absatz 4 *„die für die Erfüllung ihrer Aufgaben erforderlichen Maßnahmen nach den Artikeln 127 bis 133 und Artikel 138 und nach Maßgabe der Satzung des ESZB und der EZB“*.

Allgemein hat der Rat die angesprochenen Fragen weder erörtert noch einen Standpunkt dazu eingenommen und ist nicht in der Lage, dazu Stellung zu nehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003777/13
to the Council
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: ECSB/ECB/Eurosystem — structuring of the reserve ratio

In Regulation (EU) No 1358/2011 in December 2011, the ECB decided to reduce the reserve ratio for investments held by credit institutions of the Member States in the national central banks from 2% to 1%. The obvious aim of this move was inconspicuously to increase (double) the liquidity of the Southern European banks within the ongoing balance of payments crisis, as now every additional EUR 100 held can yield EUR 10 000 in electronic terms through lending, rather than the previous EUR 5 000. This makes it easier for Southern European banks to manage their repayments, protecting them from insolvency.

While this measure may make sense in the short term in the aftermath of the Lehmann Brothers bankruptcy, such a ridiculously small reserve ratio can only be dangerous in the long term and its retention poses extreme inflationary dangers. Even the supporters of the fiat money system in the United States maintain a reserve ratio of 10%, while the figure in China is around 30%. The aforementioned Regulation is based on Article 19.1 of the Statute of the ESCB, which, according to Article 129(3) TFEU, is under the control of the Council and Parliament of the EU. This yields the following questions:

1. Does the Council share the view that, in taking this step, the ECB has provided a particularly extreme example of many of the measures taken in the past — overturning the priorities of its own principles, the first being price stability and the second support through economic policy?

2. Does the Council share the fears of a significant increase in inflation due to the doubling of the possible loans from the national banks?

3. In view of this absurdly low reserve ratio, the associated risk of inflation and the unusual role played by the ECB during the financial crisis, does the Council believe there is a need for action to restore its own credibility, as well as long-term price stability, and to return to its original course, e.g. by setting a minimum level for the reserve ratio in Article 19.1 that even the Governing Council of the ECB must observe?

4. How does the Council view the future prospects and the immediate risk of collapse of the Eurosystem in the event of a new shortage of capital — particularly in view of the use of such desperate measures by the strictly independent ECB: the halving of the reserve ratio from 2% to 1% to enable a doubling of liquidity (12/2011) or the unlimited buying up of government bonds with a maturity of less than 3 years (9/2012)?

Reply
(31 May 2013)

The Council draws the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that on 8 December 2011 the Governing Council of the European Central Bank (ECB) announced measures to support bank lending and liquidity in the euro area money market. One of these measures was to reduce the reserve ratio, from 2% to 1%, starting on 18 January 2012. On 6 September 2012, and against a backround of tensions and uncertainty in financial markets, it decided on the modalities for undertaking Outright Monetary Transactions (OMTs) in secondary markets for sovereign bonds in the euro area.

The measures taken by the ECB fall within its area of exclusive responsibility, in line with Article 3(1)(c) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which provides that the EU shall have exclusive competence in 'monetary policy for Member States whose currency is the euro', and Article 282(1), which delegates that responsibility to the ECB. The latter, together with the national central banks of the Member States whose currency is the euro, 'shall conduct the monetary policy of the Union'. Additionally, Article 282(4) stipulates that the ECB 'shall adopt such measures as are necessary to carry out its tasks in accordance with Articles 127 to 133, with Article 138, and with the conditions laid down in the Statute of the ESCB and of the ECB'.

More generally, the Council has neither discussed nor reached a position on these issues, and is not in a position to comment on the matter.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003778/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(4 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκτίμηση των αποφάσεων και των επιπτώσεων για την Κύπρο και την ΕΕ

Στο πλαίσιο των αποφάσεων ([1]) του Eurogroup, της 25ης Μαρτίου για την Κύπρο αποφασίσθηκε η διασφάλιση των τραπεζικών καταθέσεων έως 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ και η δέσμευση σημαντικού ποσοστού κεφαλαίων για τις καταθέσεις που υπερβαίνουν το ποσό αυτό. Την ίδια στιγμή, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή σύμφωνα με το ανακοινωθέν ([2]) της 28ης Μαρτίου εγκρίνει τους κεφαλαιακούς περιορισμούς στην Κύπρο, συμβάν πρωτόγνωρο για χώρα της Ευρωζώνης, τονίζοντας πως «προέβη σε προκαταρκτική ανάλυση της κυπριακής νομοθεσίας και του σχετικού διατάγματος σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες για την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των κεφαλαίων που προβλέπονται στο άρθρο 63 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης» και πως «… η σταθερότητα των χρηματοπιστωτικών αγορών και του τραπεζικού συστήματος στην Κύπρο αποτελούν θέμα δημοσίου συμφέροντος και της δημόσιας πολιτικής που δικαιολογούν την επιβολή των προσωρινών περιορισμών στις κινήσεις κεφαλαίων».

Δεδομένης της ομοφωνίας των προαναφερόμενων κοινοτικών οργάνων στην λήψη των αποφάσεων αυτών, ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Πώς διασφαλίζει πως τα μέτρα για την Κύπρο αποτελούν μοναδική περίπτωση; Μπορεί να διασφαλίσει το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο την προστασία των εγγυημένων καταθέσεων;

2. Έχουν εκτιμηθεί οι συνέπειες που μπορεί να προκληθούν για την Κύπρο αλλά και για τις περιφερειακές ευάλωτες οικονομίες από την επιβολή των προσωρινών περιορισμών στις κινήσεις κεφαλαίων;

3. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει το γεγονός ότι οι πρόσφατες αποφάσεις συμβάλλουν στη φυγή κεφαλαίων και καταθέσεων εκτός ΕΕ και στην αποθάρρυνση της προσέλκυσης επενδυτών στην Ευρώπη και κυριότερα στην περιφέρειά της;

4. Θεωρεί πως οι πρόσφατες εξελίξεις και η αναστροφή του αρνητικού κλίματος καθιστούν ακόμα πιο αναγκαία την ολοκλήρωση της τραπεζικής ένωσης;

5. Ποια η θέση του ευρώ στο διεθνές χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα, μετά μάλιστα τη μείωση των συναλλαγματικών διαθεσίμων σε ευρώ που διατηρούν οι αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες ([3]);

Απάντηση
(9 Ιουλίου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο εφιστά την προσοχή του Αξιότιμου Μέλους στη δήλωση που εξέδωσε ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωομάδας για την Κύπρο την 25η Μαρτίου 2013, στην οποία αναφέρει ότι η Κύπρος αποτελεί εξαιρετική περίπτωση, αντιμέτωπη με εξαιρετικές προκλήσεις οι οποίες και οδήγησαν στη λήψη των συμφωνηθέντων μέτρων διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα (bail-in). Τα προγράμματα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής προσαρμόζονται σύμφωνα με τις ειδικές συνθήκες που επικρατούν σε κάθε χώρα και δεν γίνεται χρήση προκαθορισμένων μοντέλων ή προτύπων.

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα κατέληξε σε συμφωνία με τις κυπριακές αρχές ως προς τα βασικά στοιχεία ενός μελλοντικού προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής. Εξέφρασε σε γενικές γραμμές ικανοποίηση για τα σχέδια πολιτικής που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα όπως εξειδικεύονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013. Τα εν λόγω μέτρα θα διαμορφώσουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα και τη διασφάλιση όλων των καταθέσεων κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, η Ευρωομάδα σημείωσε την απόφαση των αρχών να εισάγουν τα προσήκοντα διοικητικά μέτρα, δεδομένης της υφιστάμενης μοναδικής και εξαιρετικής συγκυρίας που διέρχεται ο χρηματοπιστωτικός τομέας της Κύπρου, και να επιτρέψουν την ταχεία επαναλειτουργία των τραπεζών. Επεσήμανε ότι τα ανωτέρω διοικητικά μέτρα θα είναι προσωρινού και αναλογικού χαρακτήρα, δεν θα εισάγουν διακρίσεις και θα υπόκεινται σε αυστηρή παρακολούθηση όσον αφορά το πεδίο εφαρμογής και τη διάρκειά τους, σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη.

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-298_el.htm?locale=en
([3]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/77ebfe6c-99f4-11e2-83ca-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2PDogV1Mc

Στις 25 Απριλίου 2013, το Συμβούλιο εξέδωσε απόφαση απευθυνόμενη προς την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία σχετικά με ειδικά μέτρα για την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης. Σύμφωνα με την εν λόγω απόφαση, η Κύπρος θα προβεί στην αυστηρή εφαρμογή ενός προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής με σκοπό την επάνοδο της κυπριακής οικονομίας σε πορεία βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης και δημοσιονομικής και χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας. Το πρόγραμμα αυτό θα καλύπτει τους συγκεκριμένους κινδύνους που προέρχονται από την Κύπρο για τη χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ και αποσκοπεί στην ταχεία αποκατάσταση υγιών και βιώσιμων οικονομικών και χρηματοπιστωτικών συνθηκών στην Κύπρο και την αποκατάσταση της ικανότητάς της να αυτοχρηματοδοτείται πλήρως στις διεθνείς χρηματοπιστωτικές αγορές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003778/13
to the Council
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Appraisal of decisions and of repercussions on Cyprus and the EU

Within the framework of decisions by the Eurogroup ([1]), it was decided on 25 March to safeguard bank deposits in Cyprus below EUR 100 000 in keeping with EU principles and to freeze a large percentage of funds from deposits over and above that amount. At the same time, according to its communication on 28 March ([2]), the European Commission has approved restrictions on capital in Cyprus, an unprecedented measure in a country in the euro area, stressing that it made 'a preliminary assessment of the Cypriot laws and relevant decree under the rules on the free movement of capital set out in Article 63 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union' and that 'the stability of financial markets and the banking system in Cyprus constitutes a matter of overriding public interest and public policy justifying the imposition of temporary restrictions on capital movements.'

In view of the fact that the aforementioned EU bodies were unanimous in taking those decisions, will the Council say:

1. How will it ensure that the measures taken for Cyprus will be one-off measures? Can the European Council ensure that guaranteed deposits will be protected?

2. Has an assessment been made of the consequences that the imposition of temporary restrictions on capital movements may have on Cyprus and on vulnerable regional economies?

3. How is it dealing with the fact that recent decisions have triggered a flight of capital and deposits out of the EU and discouraged investors from investing in Europe, especially in its regional economies?

4. Does it consider that, in light of recent developments and the renewed negative climate, the completion of banking union is even more necessary?

5. What is the standing of the euro in the international financial system, following the reduction in the euro reserves held by emerging markets ([3])?

Reply
(9 July 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the statement by the Eurogroup President on Cyprus of 25 March 2013 in which he said that Cyprus was a specific case with exceptional challenges which required the bail-in measures that had been agreed upon. Macroeconomic adjustment programmes are tailor-made to the situation of the country concerned and no models or templates are used.

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cyprus authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme. It broadly welcomed the policy plans presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to the Eurogroup statement of 25 March 2013. These measures will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector and safeguarding all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

The Eurogroup also took note of the authorities' decision to introduce administrative measures, appropriate in view of the present unique and exceptional situation of Cyprus' financial sector, and to allow for a swift reopening of the banks; it stressed that these administrative measures would be temporary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and subject to strict monitoring in terms of scope and duration in line with the Treaty.

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-298_el.htm?locale=en
([3]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/77ebfe6c-99f4-11e2-83ca-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2PDogV1Mc

On 25 April 2013, the Council adopted a decision addressed to Cyprus on specific measures to restore financial stability and sustainable growth. Under this decision, Cyprus will rigorously implement a macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at helping to put the Cypriot economy back on the path of sustainable growth and fiscal and financial stability. The programme will address the specific risks emanating from Cyprus for the financial stability of the euro area and will aim to rapidly re-establish a sound and sustainable economic and financial situation in Cyprus and restore its capacity to finance itself fully on the international financial markets.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003779/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Toussas (GUE/NGL)
(4 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατασκευή και 27ετής λειτουργία 4 μονάδων επεξεργασίας σύμμεικτων δημοτικών απορριμμάτων στην Αττική

Γνωρίζει ασφαλώς η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ότι ξεκίνησε στην Αττική η διαγωνιστική διαδικασία για την κατασκευή και 27ετή λειτουργία 4 μονάδων επεξεργασίας σύμμεικτων δημοτικών απορριμμάτων (ΜΕΑ), ετήσιας παραγωγικής ικανότητας 1 355 000 τόνων ενώ ήδη λειτουργεί εργοστάσιο μηχανικής ανακύκλωσης-κομποστοποίησης (ΕΜΑΚ) ετήσιας παραγωγικής ικανότητας 300 000 τόνων. Οι 955 000 τόνοι θα υποβάλλονται σε βιολογική ξήρανση στις 3 ΜΕΑ και οι 400 000 τόνοι σε μηχανική ανακύκλωση-βιοσταθεροποίηση στην 4η ΜΕΑ. Σημειώνουμε ότι η συνολική ετήσια παραγωγή δημοτικών απορριμμάτων στην Αττική, ανέρχεται το 2012 σε 2 134 000 τόνους. Από αυτούς οι 244 000 τόνοι (11,43%) οδηγούνται στο ρεύμα συσκευασιών και έντυπου χαρτιού («μπλε κάδοι», με ποσοστό προσμείξεων 30%) και οι 1 890 000 τόνοι (88,56%) στο ρεύμα των σύμμεικτων απορριμμάτων.

Από τα παραπάνω έγκυρα στοιχεία προκύπτει ότι σύμφωνα με τον κυβερνητικό και περιφερειακό σχεδιασμό για την Αττική:

— Μέχρι το έτος 2042 ποσότητα 1 665 000 τόνων (το 78,02% των δημοτικών απορριμμάτων) θα παραμένει στο ρεύμα των σύμμεικτων απορριμμάτων.

— Τα προς ενεργειακή καύση ανακυκλώσιμα υλικά (περιλαμβανομένων των οργανικών) που περιέχονται στους 1 355 000 τόνους/έτος των δημοπρατούμενων 4 ΜΕΑ ανέρχονται στους 816 000 τόνους/έτος (το 60,22% του συνολικού φορτίου).

Δεδομένου δε ότι η κυβέρνηση επικαλείται την επιχορήγηση από κοινοτικούς πόρους για την κατασκευή των πιο πάνω 4 ΜΕΑ, που, κατά τη δική μας πεποίθηση, μόνο τα κέρδη των μονοπωλίων του κλάδου υπηρετεί και χωρίς να υπεισερχόμεθα στην παρούσα ερώτησή μας στην ακαταλληλότητα των συναφών χωροθετήσεων:

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: ποια είναι η θέση της για το πιο πάνω πρόγραμμα των 4 ΜΕΑ, που καθηλώνει τη χωριστή συλλογή και την ανακύκλωση χαρτιού και πλαστικών σε απαράδεκτα χαμηλά επίπεδα υπέρ της ενεργειακής καύσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαΐου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τα πλέον πρόσφατα στατιστικά στοιχεία της Eurostat, το 2011, στην Ελλάδα, το 82% των αστικών αποβλήτων κατέληξε σε υγειονομική ταφή και το 18% ανακυκλώθηκε, ενώ δεν αποτεφρώθηκαν αστικά απόβλητα.

Με βάση την περιγραφή των έργων που παραθέτει το αξιότιμο μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, οι τέσσερις προγραμματισμένες μονάδες επεξεργασίας ενδέχεται να συμβάλουν στην επίτευξη των στόχων όσον αφορά την εκτροπή των βιοαποδομήσιμων αποβλήτων από τους χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής ([1]), αλλά η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να εξακριβώσει αν οι εν λόγω μονάδες μπορούν να συμβάλουν πραγματικά στην επίτευξη του ποσοστού ανακύκλωσης 50% που έχει τεθεί ως στόχος για το 2020 ([2]). Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, πάντως, η Ελλάδα πρέπει να καταβάλει πολύ μεγαλύτερες προσπάθειες για τη βελτίωση της διαχείρισης των αστικών αποβλήτων, άποψη που έχει εκφραστεί σε σειρά σχετικών συστάσεων προς τη χώρα ([3]), όπως η επιτακτική ανάγκη βελτιώσεων όσον αφορά τη χωριστή συλλογή και η χρήση οικονομικών μέσων για τη διαχείριση των αποβλήτων, π.χ. φόρων υγειονομικής ταφής και συστημάτων πληρωμής κατά την απόρριψη αποβλήτων (pay-as-you-throw).

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που έχουν ληφθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές, οι προκηρύξεις διαγωνισμών για τις τέσσερις προγραμματισμένες μονάδες επεξεργασίας δημοσιεύθηκαν στα τέλη του 2012. Οι διαγωνισμοί αυτοί βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη και καλύπτουν κάθε είδους τεχνολογία βάσει ρυθμίσεων για συμπράξεις δημόσιου-ιδιωτικού τομέα. Δεν έχουν υποβληθεί στην Επιτροπή σχετικές αιτήσεις για μεγάλα έργα.

([1]) Άρθρο 5 παράγραφος 2 της οδηγίας 1999/31/ΕΚ περί υγειονομικής ταφής των αποβλήτων, ΕΕ L 182 της 16.7.1999, σ. 1.
([2]) Άρθρο 11 παράγραφος 2 της οδηγίας 2008/98/ΕΚ για τα απόβλητα, ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/pdf/GR%20Roadmap_FINAL.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003779/13
to the Commission
Georgios Toussas (GUE/NGL)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Construction and 27-year franchise of four mixed public waste processing units in Attica

The European Commission must know that a tendering procedure has been launched in Attica for the construction of and a 27-year franchise for four mixed public waste processing units with an annual production capacity of 1 355 000 tonnes, even though a mechanical recycling/composting plant with a production capacity of 300 000 tonnes is already in operation. 955 000 tonnes of organic waste will be dehydrated in 3 public waste processing units and 400 000 tonnes will be mechanically recycled/bio-stabilised in the 4th public waste processing unit. It should be noted that a total of 2 134 000 tonnes of municipal waste was produced in Attica in 2012. Of this, 244 000 tonnes (11.43%) was collected as packaging and printed paper ('blue bins', with 30% foreign waste) and 1 890 000 tonnes (88.56%) was collected as mixed waste.

It is clear from the above figures, which come from a reliable source, that under the Government and regional plan for Attica:

— between now and 2042, 1 665 000 tonnes (78.02% of municipal waste) will still be collected as mixed waste;

— the recyclable material (including organic material) for incineration and energy recovery included in the 1 355 000 tonnes per annum put out to tender by four public waste processing units totals 816 000 tonnes per annum (60.22% of the total load).

Given that the Government is being called on to subsidise the construction of the four aforementioned public waste processing units from Community funds, which we believe will simply increase the profits of the monopolies in that sector, and without going into the unsuitability of the locations in question in the present question:

Will the Commission say: what is its position on the above programme for four public waste processing units, which pegs separate collection and recycling of paper and plastic at unacceptably low levels in favour of incineration and energy recovery?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

According to the latest statistics produced by Eurostat, in 2011 Greece landfilled 82% of its municipal waste and recycled 18%. Greece did not incinerate municipal waste.

While the four planned facilities may contribute to reaching the targets on diversion of biodegradable waste from landfills ([1]), based on the description of projects provided by Honourable Member, the Commission is unable to ascertain if such plants can effectively contribute to achieving the 50% recycling target in 2020 ([2]). In any case, the Commission is of the view that much more needs to be done in Greece to improve the management of municipal waste as is reflected in a set of recommendations to Greece on this matter ([3]) such as the imperative need to improve on separate collection and the use of economic instruments applied to waste management e.g. landfill taxes and pay-as-you-throw schemes.

According to the information received from the Greek authorities, calls for tenders on the four planned facilities were published at the end of 2012. Such tenders are still on-going and open to all type of technologies under Public-Private Partnership arrangements. The Commission has not received any related major project applications.

([1]) Article 5.2 of Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([2]) Article 11 (2) of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/pdf/GR%20Roadmap_FINAL.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003780/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Imposition of capital controls

Under what circumstances does the Commission interpret the EU Treaties which allow for the imposition of capital controls?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Under Article 65 TFEU, Member States are allowed to impose such restrictions under certain conditions and as long as they are proportionate, non-discriminatory and temporary.

The Commission, as a guardian of the Treaty, reviews measures notified by Member States and ensures that these measures last no longer than strictly necessary and are gradually relaxed and lifted with the view to reinstating the free movement of capital as soon as possible.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003781/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Levy on Chinese solar panels

1. Does the EU plan to apply a tariff to Chinese solar panels?

2. If so, will the levy be retroactive?

3. What impact will such a levy have on the EU's carbon reduction targets?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. The investigations are currently underway. Provisional findings will have to be issued by June 2013 on the anti-dumping proceeding and by August 2013 on the anti-subsidy proceeding. The definitive measures, if any, are due in early December 2013.

2. Since imports of Chinese solar panels are subject to registration under Commission Regulation (EU) No 182/2013 ([1]) there is a possibility of retroactive collection of duties, in case measures are imposed.

3. In an anti-dumping investigation, the interests of other operators in the Union market are investigated in the context of the Union interest test. Therefore, the Commission will address arguments raised by interested parties on the impact of measures on the goals of the EU Agenda 2020 concerning the renewable sources of energy and a reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions. The Commission is conducting this analysis in close cooperation with the associated services.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 182/2013 of 1 March 2013 making imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components (i.e. cells and wafers) originating in or consigned from the People's Republic of China subject to registration, OJ L 61, 5.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003782/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: EU funds for the development of roads in Madeira

What amount of EU funds has been allocated for the development and modernisation of Madeira's road infrastructure over the past five years (2008-2012)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

In the 2007-2013 period, the following EU funds for road infrastructure have been allocated to Madeira: EUR 18 million of European Regional Development funding for local roads (3.5 km of new construction and modernisation) and EUR 27 million of Cohesion Fund support for Highway 'Via Expresso' link airport — port of Funchal.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-003783/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(4 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Limitarea drepturilor persoanelor vârstnice de către companiile de asigurări

Conform statisticilor publicate de Eurostat în 2012, în anul 2010 cetățenii europeni cu vârsta de peste 65 de ani reprezentau 17,4% din totalul populației UE, această cifră fiind prognozată să crească la 29,5% până în 2060. Cu toate acestea, anumite companii de asigurări din UE și-au adoptat reguli interne prin care se stipulează că persoanele care doresc să călătorească pe teritoriul UE și nu numai pot fi asigurate doar dacă au vârsta (ani împliniți) cuprinsă între 0 și 70 de ani la data asigurării.

Aceste reguli interne ale companiilor de asigurări creează discriminări între cetățenii UE pe criterii de vârstă și îngrădesc atât libera circulație a persoanelor cât și dezvoltarea turismului pe teritoriul UE. Având în vedere cele mai sus menționate, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere pentru a se asigura că astfel de discriminări pe criteriul vârstei nu vor mai fi permise companiilor de asigurări.

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(8 mai 2013)

Chiar dacă în temeiul legislației UE în vigoare discriminarea pe criterii de vârstă este interzisă în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă, nu există în prezent acte legislative ale UE care să reglementeze accesul la bunuri și servicii.

În 2008, Comisia a prezentat o propunere de directivă ([1]) care ar introduce o interdicție a discriminării pe criterii de vârstă (printre alte criterii) în ceea ce privește accesul la bunuri și servicii, inclusiv la produse financiare cum ar fi asigurările. Propunerea legislativă menționată anterior este în continuare în curs de negociere în cadrul Consiliului, fiind necesară unanimitatea voturilor pentru adoptarea acesteia.

Proiectul de directivă include o dispoziție specifică privind serviciile financiare, conform căreia diferențele proporționale de tratament pe criterii de vârstă nu ar constitui discriminare cu condiția ca vârsta să fie un factor determinant în evaluarea riscurilor pentru serviciul în cauză și ca această evaluare să se bazeze pe principii actuariale și pe date statistice.

([1]) Propunere de directivă a Consiliului cu privire la punerea în aplicare a principiului tratamentului egal al persoanelor indiferent de religie sau convingeri, handicap, vârstă sau orientare sexuală, COM (2008) 426 final, 2.7.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003783/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Restrictions affecting insurance cover entitlements for the elderly

According to Eurostat figures appearing in 2012, 17.4% of the total EU population was over 65 years of age in 2010, a figure expected to rise to 29.5% by 2060. Despite this, a number of EU insurance companies have adopted internal rules limiting insurance cover for travel within the EU and elsewhere to those in their seventieth year or below on the policy date.

Such provisions are resulting in age-based discrimination within the EU and restricting both the free movement of persons and the growth of tourism within the EU.

In view of this:

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that such age-based discrimination on the part of insurance companies will no longer be tolerated in future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

While age-based discrimination in employment is prohibited under existing EC law, there is currently no such legislation covering the access to goods and services.

In 2008, the Commission issued a proposal for a directive ([1]) that would introduce a ban on discrimination on the grounds of age (among other grounds) in access to goods and services, including financial products such as insurance. This legislative proposal is still being negotiated in Council where unanimity is required for its adoption.

The draft Directive includes a specific provision on financial services, according to which proportionate differences in treatment on the grounds of age would not constitute discrimination provided that age is a determining factor in the assessment of risk for the service in question and that this assessment is based on actuarial principles and statistical data.

([1]) Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, COM(2008) 426 final, 2.7.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003784/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Mancato recepimento da parte dell'Italia della direttiva 2004/80/CE sulla tutela delle vittime di reati violenti

Il 22 Aprile 2008 un clandestino marocchino (all'epoca dei fatti 24enne) abusava sessualmente di una bambina di dieci anni affetta da deficit mentale nel comune di Santa Lucia di Piave in provincia di Treviso.

L'imputato veniva condannato in primo grado ([1]) alla pena di sette anni di reclusione e al risarcimento del danno, in favore della vittima dell'abuso sessuale, quantificato in 125 000 euro. Sia il condannato che il Procuratore Generale impugnavano la sentenza.

La Corte d'Appello ([2]) riformava la sentenza del Tribunale di Treviso aumentando la pena inflitta a otto anni di reclusione.

Il reo proponeva ricorso alla Corte di Cassazione ([3]) che rinviava gli atti alla Corte d'Appello di Venezia. Con il suddetto rinvio il 30 marzo 2012 la vicenda processuale si concludeva definitivamente con una nuova Sentenza di condanna. ([4])

La vittima del reato, oggi quindicenne, non ha ricevuto e non riceverà alcun indennizzo in quanto l'imputato è nullatenente.

Nella fattispecie in questione e in altre analoghe, lo Stato avrebbe il dovere di indennizzare le vittime dei reati intenzionali violenti ove il condannato non abbia i mezzi necessari così come prevede il capo II, articolo 12, comma 2 della direttiva 2004/80/CE.

Quali iniziative intende intraprendere la Commissione per assicurare il corretto recepimento della succitata direttiva da parte della Repubblica italiana al fine di tutelare le vittime di reati violenti anche in Italia?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole delle difficoltà sollevate dall'applicazione della direttiva 2004/80/CE relativa all'indennizzo delle vittime di reato in Italia.

In base alla direttiva, tutti gli Stati membri dovevano comunicare alla Commissione le disposizioni nazionali di recepimento entro il 1° gennaio 2006. Poiché l'Italia non ha effettuato la notifica entro i termini previsti, nel 2006 la Commissione ha avviato nei suoi confronti un procedimento di infrazione a norma dell'articolo 226 del trattato CE, per mancata notifica. In seguito l'Italia ha ottemperato a tale obbligo comunicando le disposizioni di diritto interno adottate ([5]).

Nello specificare gli elementi costitutivi dei sistemi di indennizzo nazionali, l'articolo 12, paragrafo 2, della direttiva dispone che tutti gli Stati membri «provvedono a che le loro normative nazionali prevedano l'esistenza di un sistema di indennizzo delle vittime di reati intenzionali violenti ([6]) commessi nei rispettivi territori, che garantisca un indennizzo equo ed adeguato delle vittime».

Quando la Commissione ha pubblicato la relazione sull'attuazione della direttiva ([7]), le misure di recepimento italiane risultavano sufficienti a garantire il conseguimento degli obiettivi specifici previsti all'articolo 12.

([1]) Sentenza del Tribunale di Treviso, 12.5.2009, Sezione Penale.
([2]) Sentenza della Corte d'Appello di Venezia, n. 458/2010, Sezione III Penale.
([3]) Sentenza della Corte di Cassazione, n. 1390/11, III Sezione Penale.
([4]) Sentenza della Corte d'Appello di Venezia, n. 25/2012, Sezione II Penale.
([5]) Decreto legislativo 9 novembre 2007 n. 204.
([6]) Sottolineatura aggiunta nel presente testo.
([7]) COM(2009)170 definitivo.

Sulla base di denunce analoghe a quella presentata dall'onorevole parlamentare e delle informazioni ricevute negli ultimi anni ([8]), la Commissione ha verificato più attentamente se l'Italia si sia effettivamente conformata all'obbligo specifico di istituire un sistema generale; in seguito a un'analisi approfondita, ha avviato nel 2012 un procedimento di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia per mancata conformità alla direttiva 2004/80/CE e attualmente sta considerando le ulteriori fasi della procedura.

([8]) La legislazione italiana prevede soltanto l'indennizzo delle vittime di alcuni reati intenzionali violenti, quali il terrorismo e la criminalità organizzata, ma non di tutti i reati di quel tipo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003784/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Italy's failure to transpose Directive 2004/80/EC on the protection of victims of violent crime

On 22 April 2008, a Moroccan illegal immigrant (who was 24 years old at the time) sexually abused a 10-year-old girl with learning difficulties in Santa Lucia di Piave in the province of Treviso.

The accused was found guilty at first instance ([1]), sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and ordered to pay EUR 125 000 in damages to the victim. Both the defendant and the Public Prosecutor appealed against the ruling.

The Court of Appeal ([2]) revised the ruling of the Court of Treviso, increasing the sentence to eight years' imprisonment.

The offender appealed to the Court of Cassation ([3]), which referred the case to the Venice Court of Appeal. Following this referral, on 30 March 2012 the case was definitively closed with a new judgment ([4]).

The victim of the crime, now 15 years old, has not received compensation nor will she receive any, since the offender has no income or assets.

In this and similar cases, it is the State's duty to compensate victims of deliberate violent crimes when the convicted person does not have the means to do so, as laid down in Chapter II Article 12(2) of Directive 2004/80/EC.

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the above directive is properly transposed by the Italian Republic in order to protect the victims of violent crime in Italy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficulties raised by the application of Directive 2004/80/EC relating to compensation to crime victims in Italy.

The directive required all Member States to notify the Commission by 1 January 2006 their national transposition measures. As Italy did not make the required notification by that date, the Commission launched an infringement procedure under Article 226 of the EC Treaty against Italy for non-notification in 2006. Since then, Italy, has notified the Commission of its national legislation in accordance with its obligation ([5]).

Article 12(2) specifies the constituent elements of national compensation schemes and provides that all Member States 'shall ensure that their national rules provide for the existence of a scheme on compensation to victims of violent intentional crimes ([6]) committed in their respective territories, which guarantees fair and appropriate compensation to victims'.

At the time of the Commission's implementation report on the directive ([7]), Italian transposing measures appeared sufficient to ensure the achievement of the specific objectives foreseen by Article 12 of the directive.

([1]) Judgment of 12.5.2009 of the Court of Treviso, Criminal Division.
([2]) Judgment No 458/2010 of the Court of Appeal of Venice, Criminal Division III.
([3]) Judgment No 1390/11 of the Court of Cassation, Criminal Division III.
([4]) Judgment No 25/2012 of the Court of Appeal of Venice, Criminal Division II.
([5]) Decreto legislativo 9 novembre 2007 n°204.
([6]) Underlined added.
([7]) COM(2009) 170 final.

The Commission advises that, based on complaints similar to those raised by the Honourable Member and on information received in recent years ([8]), the Commission has reexamined in more detail whether Italy did comply with the particular obligation to set up a general scheme.

As a result of this in depth analysis, the Commission has started an infringement procedure against Italy for non-compliance with Directive 2004/80/EC in 2012 and it is currently considering further steps of the procedure.

([8]) That Italian legislation provides merely for compensation to victims of certain violent intentional crimes, such as terrorism or organised crime, but not for all of them.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003785/13
à Comissão
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(4 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Estudo sobre o impacto do fim das quotas leiteiras na Europa

Desde o último período de sessões plenárias em Estrasburgo, em março de 2013, tem sido veiculado na comunicação social, e por membros do Parlamento Europeu, que a Comissão Europeia está na posse de resultados de um estudo com elementos sobre o impacto do fim das quotas leiteiras na Europa, que faz uma previsão absolutamente negra e catastrófica para o setor leiteiro na União Europeia, onde apenas a Dinamarca e os Países Baixos, segundo o documento, poderiam conseguir efetivamente manter a sua produção a um nível sustentável.

Como sabe, desde o início do meu mandato que tenho manifestado preocupação com o fim das quotas leiteiras e com as suas consequências para muitos territórios da União. Decerto se recorda da reunião que mantivemos, conjuntamente com o meu colega Capoulas Santos e com a direção do Grupo Parlamentar do PS Açores, na qual acordámos na importância de introduzir uma avaliação da dimensão territorial no estudo, agora em curso, sobre a «Análise da evolução futura do setor do leite», num cenário pós-quotas, sobretudo em regiões com forte vocação produtiva, como os Açores, mas que apresentam características próprias de região ultraperiférica, como são o seu afastamento dos mercados e a sua pequena escala.

Por isso, ao tomar conhecimento destas notícias, entrei em contacto com o seu Gabinete, que me reencaminhou para o gabinete do Diretor-Geral, onde um seu assistente me garantiu ainda não existir qualquer resultado deste estudo, ou de qualquer outro estudo.

No entanto, estas notícias continuam, afirmando referirem-se a um outro estudo, que não aquele a que acima aludi, no âmbito da reunião que mantivemos, antes da elaboração do seu caderno de encargos. Quero, portanto, perguntar com toda a clareza: existem já alguns resultados preliminares do estudo em curso?

Existe qualquer outro estudo com dados sobre o impacto do fim das quotas leiteiras na Europa, onde se faça uma previsão negra para o setor e de onde se conclua que apenas dois Estados-Membros, nomeadamente a Dinamarca e os Países Baixos, conseguirão manter uma produção sustentável?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita P-003390/2013 ([1]).

No que diz respeito ao novo estudo lançado pela Comissão no final de 2012 e cujos resultados são aguardados para o final de julho de 2013, as conclusões preliminares do contratante externo não serão publicadas antes da conclusão total do estudo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003785/13
to the Commission
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Impact study on the end of milk quotas in Europe

Since the last plenary session in Strasbourg, in March 2013, it has been reported on social media, and by members of the European Parliament, that the Commission is in possession of the results of a study, including details on the impact of the end of milk quotas in Europe, which predicts an utterly dismal and catastrophic future for the EU's dairy sector, in which only Denmark and the Netherlands, according to the document, could actually maintain their production at a sustainable level.

Since the start of my mandate I have expressed concern about ending milk quotas and the consequences it will have for many regions of the EU. The Commission will recall the meeting that we held, together with my colleague Mr Capoulas Santos and with the leadership of the Socialist Party parliamentary group for the Azores, in which we agreed that it was important to add an assessment of the regional dimension to the study currently looking at the future development of the dairy sector in a post-quotas scenario, especially in regions with high levels of production, such as the Azores, but which have the specific characteristics of outermost regions, such as being far away from markets and being small in size.

On hearing this news, I therefore contacted the Commission, which referred me to the office of the Director-General, whose assistant assured me that there were no results from this study yet, or from any other study.

The rumours persist, however, pointing to another study, different from the one I mention above in the context of the meeting that we held, from before the latter was even designed. I would therefore like directly to ask: are there any preliminary results yet from the study in progress?

Are there any other studies with data on the impact of the end of milk quotas in Europe, which predict a dismal future for the sector and which conclude that only two Member States, namely Denmark and the Netherlands, will be able to maintain sustainable production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-003390/2013 ([1]).

With regard to the new study launched by the Commission at the end of 2012 and whose results are expected at the end of July 2013, preliminary findings of the external contractor will not be published before the full completion of the study.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003786/13
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Zona franca di Capodistria

Il ministro sloveno dello sviluppo economico Stanko Stepišnik, il presidente del Consiglio d'amministrazione e il sindaco di Capodistria hanno sottoscritto recentemente un accordo con il quale si impegnano a favorire la crescita e lo sviluppo dello scalo del porto di Capodistria in funzione della crescita economica di tutta la Slovenia. In concreto, il comune di Capodistria non si opporrà al prolungamento del primo molo (quello per contenitori) del porto capodistriano, mentre il presidente del Consiglio d'amministrazione garantirà gli spazi e favorirà la costruzione del nuovo terminal passeggeri. Il ministero dell'economia, a sua volta, si impegnerà ad accelerare lo sviluppo dell'intera regione, anche studiando l'ipotesi di istituire una ampia zona franca nel comune costiero.

Se da un lato, a norma degli articoli 156 e 160 della direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2006 ([1]), ([2]) gli Stati membri, tramite la loro relativa legislazione nazionale e sotto la loro responsabilità per quanto riguarda la corretta applicazione, possono esentare dall'IVA le cessioni di beni destinati a essere collocati in una zona franca e le cessioni di beni e le prestazioni di servizi effettuate nella stessa, dall'altro, però, l'istituzione di zone franche, se prevede la concessione di incentivi fiscali o di altri vantaggi che costituiscono aiuti di Stato, può essere autorizzata dalla Commissione solamente se contribuisce agli obiettivi di interesse comune e non falsa indebitamente la concorrenza e il commercio.

L'istituzione di zona franca a Capodistria causerebbe una concorrenza fiscale dannosa e i privilegi fiscali concessi potrebbero avere effetti distorsivi sia sugli altri Stati membri, sia sulle zone confinanti dello stesso paese.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione valutare se, malgrado la grave crisi economica e sociale che interessa l'Europa, sia opportuno che la Slovenia proceda alla creazione di una zona franca a Capodistria al fine di procurarsi vantaggi competitivi?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

In virtù dell'articolo 167 del codice doganale comunitario (CDC), gli Stati membri possono destinare talune parti del territorio doganale dell'Unione a zona franca. Quella di Capodistria è una zona franca ai sensi di tale disposizione. A norma dell'articolo 166 del CDC, le zone franche sono parti del territorio doganale dell'Unione in cui:

— le merci non unionali sono considerate, per l'applicazione dei dazi all'importazione e delle misure di politica commerciale all'importazione, come merci non situate nel territorio doganale dell'Unione, il che impedisce l'applicazione dei dazi e delle misure in questione all'interno della zona;

— le merci unionali, per le quali una normativa dell'Unione specifica lo preveda, beneficiano, a motivo del loro collocamento in tale zona franca, di misure connesse, in linea di massima, alla loro esportazione.

A norma dell'articolo 4, punti 8 e 6 della direttiva 118/2008/CE, le merci non unionali in una zona franca non sono sottoposte ad accisa. Le merci unionali provenienti da un'altra parte del territorio dell'Unione devono essere spedite ad un deposito fiscale all'interno della zona franca per beneficiare della sospensione dei diritti di accisa.

Ai fini dell'IVA, gli Stati membri hanno la facoltà di applicare nel loro territorio esenzioni dall'IVA sulla cessione di merci e la prestazione di servizi nelle zone franche. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti a consultare preventivamente il comitato IVA in merito alle esenzioni che intendono applicare. Una volta decise le esenzioni, gli Stati membri devono applicarle a tutte le zone franche all'interno del loro territorio.

Infine, se la zona franca di Capodistria prevede incentivi fiscali per talune imprese o talune produzioni, questi possono costituire aiuti di Stato che vanno notificati dallo Stato membro alla Commissione per essere approvati.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2006, relativa al sistema comune d'imposta sul valore aggiunto, GU L 347 dell'11.12.2006.

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006217&language=IT#def1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003786/13
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Free zone status for the port of Koper

Stanko Stepišnik, the Slovene Minister for Economic Development, the Chair of the Koper port governing board and the Mayor of Koper have recently signed an agreement to encourage the expansion and improvement of port facilities in line with economic growth in Slovenia as a whole. In practice, this means that the Koper municipal authorities will not oppose extension of the first loading dock (for container vessels) within the port, while the Chair of the port governing board will guarantee the necessary spaces and push for the construction of a new passenger terminal. The Minister for Economic Development in turn will seek to boost growth throughout the region and consider the possibility of granting extensive free zone status to this coastal municipality.

On the one hand, under Articles 156 and 160 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 ([1]) ([2]) Member States may, under their national legislations and on their own responsibility regarding the correct application thereof, exempt from VAT the supply of goods which are intended to be placed in a free zone and the supply of goods and services carried out in such locations. On the other hand, if the establishment of free zones involves tax incentives or other advantages constituting state aid, this can only be authorised by the Commission if it contributes to objectives serving the common interest and does not unduly distort competition and trade.

The granting of free zone status to Koper would lead to harmful tax competition and the resulting tax concessions could result in distortions affecting other Member States or areas adjoining Slovenia.

In view of this:

Can the Commission indicate whether, notwithstanding the serious economic and social crisis afflicting Europe, Slovenia should be allowed to accord Koper free zone status with a view to securing competitive advantages?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

Member States may designate parts of the customs territory of the Union as free zones in accordance with Article 167 of the Community Customs Code (CCC). The Free Zone of Koper is operated as a free zone within the meaning of that provision. In accordance with Article 166 CCC, free zones are parts of the customs territory of the Union in which:

— non-Union goods are considered, for the purposes of import duties and commercial policy import measures, as not being in the customs territory of the Union, thus preventing the application of such duties and measures within the zone;

— Union goods qualify, by virtue of being placed in a free zone, for measures normally attached to the export of goods where this is provided for under Union legislation.

In accordance with Article 4(8) and (6) of Directive 118/2008, non-Union goods are not subject to excise duty in a free zone. Union goods arriving from another part of the territory of the Union must be delivered to a tax warehouse inside the free zone in order to benefit from excise duty suspension.

For VAT purposes, Member States have an option to apply in their territory VAT exemptions on supply of goods and services in the free zones. Member States are obliged to consult in advance the VAT Committee on which exemptions they opted to apply. Once opted, Member States shall apply the exemptions to all free zones in their territory.

Finally, if the free zone of Koper involves tax incentives for certain undertakings or the production of certain goods, this may involve state aid which requires notification from the Member State to the Commission for approval.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the Common System of Value Added Tax, OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006217&language=IT#def1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003787/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Active ageing: rural communities

The issue of loneliness and isolation amongst the elderly in Europe has become problematic and more prevalent in recent times. Studies have shown that loneliness and social isolation can result in higher rates of health problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure and dementia and are significant barriers to active and independent living. In this regard, could the European Commission outline steps which have been taken to alleviate this problem and further encourage independent living under the European Innovation Partnership on Active & Healthy Ageing, which was launched in 2010?

Furthermore, the European Union is facing a demographic transition, owing to its rapidly ageing population. Recent reports have revealed that the European Union's population aged 65 years and older is set to double from 85 million in 2008 to 151 million by 2060.

In this regard, could the Commission provide details on its future policy plans to effectively accommodate the projected growing needs of ageing European citizens?

Has the Commission devised measures to further build upon the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The European Commission is responding to the challenges posed by population ageing through different policies and using its various funding programmes.

Active ageing is an essential part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the success of which depends to a large extent on enabling older people to contribute fully to society and the labour market. The Commission is promoting better conditions for active ageing in policy areas such as pensions, health and long-term care, employment, ICT, antidiscrimination, adult education and transport.

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing ([1]) launched in 2011, is supporting the deployment and scale up of innovative solutions ([2]) in support of active and healthy ageing. It goes beyond technical solutions and includes broader health and wellbeing aspects of healthy ageing (including preventing cardiovascular diseases, functional decline, both physical and cognitive) and fostering greater participation of older citizens. The EIP has mobilised more than 3000 partners carrying out actions on prevention, care and cure and promoting independent living.

The Commission has recently presented a Social Investment Package ([3]) which gives follow-up to the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations by calling on Member States to use the Guiding Principles for Active Ageing ([4]) and the Active Ageing Index ([5]). The package also includes a Commission Staff working document on long-term care in ageing societies ([6]). As follow-up measures to the European Year 2012 the Commission will support in 2013 Member States in developing comprehensive active ageing strategies and launch a joint project with the World Health Organisation for creating age-friendly cities in Europe.

([1]) EIP.
([2]) products, services, organisational, process and social.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en.
([4]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&catId=970&newsId=1743&furtherNews=yes.
([5]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&catId=970&newsId=1837&furtherNews=yes.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003788/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(4 avril 2013)

Objet: Quelle politique pour les données et les informations de Copernicus/GMES

Fin février, la Commission européenne a présenté son programme d'action pour l'industrie spatiale, dans lequel elle s'engage à créer les conditions nécessaires pour stimuler la pleine exploitation des données spatiales et le développement d'applications innovantes.

En effet, l'utilisation étendue des données spatiales, et notamment celles de Copernicus/GMES, aurait des retombées bénéfiques pour l'ensemble de nos économies. Cette conclusion se retrouve dans un rapport récent commandé par l'agence spatiale européenne, qui souligne notamment l'importance du marché des services de géolocalisation, estimé à une valeur de 90 milliards d'euros.

Malheureusement, le programme d'action de la Commission ne contient pas plus de détails quant au contenu ou aux délais considérés. En tant que rapporteure fictive du groupe PPE, je m'étais investie dans la définition de la position du Parlement européen sur le programme GMES. Déjà en 2010, nous demandions à la Commission d'adopter les actes délégués nécessaires pour garantir un accès total et ouvert aux informations fournies par GMES, et pour promouvoir l'utilisation et le partage de ces informations et de ces données.

Or, en laissant ainsi ce dossier prendre du retard, ce sont les citoyens, nos entreprises, dont de nombreuses PME, que nous privons de ressources immenses pour innover, relancer notre activité et créer de l'emploi.

La Commission peut-elle nous indiquer où en est ce dossier, et dans quels délais précis elle compte présenter les actes concernés?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(29 mai 2013)

La Commission partage l'avis de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur les retombées bénéfiques pour l'environnement, l'économie et le bien-être social de la mise en œuvre du programme Copernicus. L'auteure de la question souligne à juste titre que ce puissant potentiel économique est subordonné à la mise à la disposition de l'utilisateur de données et d'informations de Copernicus dans le cadre d'une politique d'accès total et ouvert, permettant l'éclosion d'initiatives commerciales innovantes de toutes envergures.

Afin de pouvoir adopter l'acte délégué requis, la Commission

— a rédigé un document préparatoire en décembre 2011,

— a organisé un atelier en janvier 2012, ouvert à toutes les parties intéressées,

— a invité des experts, notamment du Parlement européen et des États membres, à commenter oralement ou par écrit quatre versions successives d'un document de travail détaillé destiné à préparer la rédaction de l'acte délégué.

La Commission tenait beaucoup à rassembler un large consensus sur le document de travail, en particulier concernant son champ d'application et les questions de sécurité. Elle y est parvenue avec le projet d'acte délégué qui devrait bientôt être soumis au processus d'adoption de la Commission. Cette version de l'acte délégué s'inscrit dans l'esprit des documents précédents de la Commission et de l'Agence spatiale européenne (ESA), notamment pour ce qui concerne les principes communs en vue d'une politique en matière de données «Sentinelles» adoptés par le conseil de programme «Observation de la Terre» de ladite Agence. Grâce à ces documents et à l'atelier ouvert organisé par la Commission, les parties prenantes sont parfaitement au fait des principales conditions d'accès aux données et informations de Copernicus. L'industrie accède déjà gratuitement, totalement et ouvertement aux données découlant de projets de recherche et se prépare activement à exploiter l'importante augmentation annoncée du flux de données et d'informations de Copernicus dans l'hypothèse de son financement au travers du cadre financier pluriannuel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003788/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Copernicus/GMES data and information policy

At the end of February, the Commission presented its action plan for the space industry, in which it outlines its commitment to create the conditions needed to encourage comprehensive use of space data and the development of innovative applications.

Expanding the use of space data, particularly from Copernicus/GMES, is expected to generate economic benefits across Europe. This is the conclusion reached in a recent report commissioned by the European Space Agency, which draws attention to the size of the market in geolocalisation services, valued at EUR 90 billion.

Unfortunately, the Commission's action plan contains no further details of the actual measures to be taken or the time scales involved. As shadow rapporteur for the PPE Group, I was closely involved in drawing up Parliament's position on the GMES programme. As long ago as in 2010, we were calling on the Commission to adopt the delegated acts needed to guarantee full and open access to the information provided by GMES, and to promote the use and sharing of this information and data.

By allowing the process to drag on in this way, we are depriving individuals and businesses, including many small and medium-sized businesses, of a wealth of resources that they could use to innovate, boost the economy and create jobs.

Can the Commission say what stage has been reached in this process, and exactly when it hopes to put forward the delegated acts concerned?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's opinion on the great environmental social and economic benefits to be realised through the implementation of the Copernicus programme. She rightly points out that this high economic potential is conditional on the availability of Copernicus data and information to the user under a full and open access policy, enabling innovative business initiatives of all sizes to flourish.

In order to adopt the necessary delegated act, the Commission

— drafted a scene setting document in December 2011

— organised a workshop in January 2012, open to all interested parties

— invited experts, including from the European Parliament and the Member States, to discuss four successive versions of a detailed working document preparing the delegated act orally and/or via written comments.

The Commission was eager to build a large consensus around the working document in particular in relation to its scope and security issues. This has been achieved in the draft version of the delegated act which should soon enter into the Commission adoption process. It is in line with previous Commission and ESA documents, in particular the Joint Principles for a Sentinel Data Policy adopted by the ESA Programme Board for Earth Observation. Stakeholders, through these documents and the Commission open workshop, are well aware of the main conditions of access to the Copernicus data and information. Industry is already accessing existing Copernicus data and information from research projects on a free, full and open basis and is actively preparing itself in anticipation of the steep increase of data and information from Copernicus operations assuming its funding via the Multiannual Financial Framework.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003789/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: In che modo l'Europa può trarre vantaggio dalla crescita dell'Africa?

Lo sviluppo del continente africano è fondamentale per il benessere, la prosperità e la sicurezza globali. Spesso percepita come terra di carestia, malattia e povertà, l'Africa è ora in fase di mutamento. Secondo le più recenti previsioni del *World Economic Outlook*, vi si trovano sette delle dieci economie a più rapida crescita al mondo, sebbene il continente africano abbia bisogno del sostegno dei Paesi occidentali per accelerare il processo di sviluppo. Un periodo di crisi come quello in atto su scala mondiale potrebbe rappresentare il momento adatto per investire in un continente che offre svariate possibilità: un aumento della produttività agricola, ad esempio, può spianare la strada alla crescita sostenibile, alla diminuzione delle carestie e a nuove opportunità lavorative. Parimenti, è essenziale promuovere l'agricoltura al fine di trasformarla in un settore delle esportazioni sicuro. A tal fine, occorre fondarsi sulla flessibilità del mercato e su politiche coerenti tra i Paesi africani ed europei.

Tale approccio permette di scongiurare ripercussioni negative sulle economie nazionali e sull'occupazione e di raggiungere un accordo equilibrato.

Tenuto conto che:

— la tutela da parte dell'Unione europea di alcuni settori, in particolare l'agricoltura, tramite sovvenzioni impedisce ai paesi emergenti di competere con i prodotti dell'UE, con il conseguente crollo dei mercati locali;

— l'articolo 208 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE) afferma chiaramente che l'obiettivo della cooperazione allo sviluppo è l'eliminazione della povertà e le politiche commerciali possono soltanto incoraggiare e rafforzare le iniziative di sviluppo e non pregiudicarle;

può la Commissione far sapere:

— se intende contribuire ad ampliare le opportunità di mercato,

— se intende favorire l'integrazione nazionale e internazionale dei paesi in via di sviluppo,

— se intende promuovere la cooperazione tra l'Africa e gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, affinché i paesi africani non siano più esposti a malattie, povertà e calamità.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2013)

Sostenere la crescita e l'integrazione economica dell'Africa è un obiettivo fondamentale della strategia comune Africa-UE del 2007 che istituisce un partenariato specifico per l'integrazione regionale e il commercio, nonché per l'agricoltura, come confermato dalla Commissione europea e dalla commissione dell'Unione africana (UA) durante l'incontro del 26 aprile 2013.

Al fine di ampliare l'accesso ai mercati e di sostenere la capacità produttiva e l'integrazione economica, l'Unione europea ha concluso accordi sostanzialmente con tutti gli Stati africani, o bilateralmente o nel quadro dell'accordo di partenariato di Cotonou, e sta negoziando accordi di partenariato economico regionali. Unilateralmente l'Unione mette a disposizione dei paesi in via di sviluppo il sistema di preferenze generalizzate, unitamente al regime «Tutto tranne le armi» che offre ai paesi meno sviluppati un'esenzione dai dazi doganali e un accesso al mercato esente da quote per i loro prodotti. L'Unione europea resta di gran lunga il partner commerciale più importante per i paesi dell'Africa subsahariana, dei quali importa il 50 % delle esportazioni agricole. Il dispositivo di aiuti al commercio assiste i nostri partner affinché possano beneficiare di condizioni di accesso preferenziale al mercato. L'Africa è il principale beneficiario degli aiuti al commercio dell'Unione europea (36 % del totale, inclusi gli aiuti degli Stati membri, nel 2011).

La Commissione concorda pienamente sul fatto che l'agricoltura sia un settore cruciale per sconfiggere la povertà. Con la comunicazione del 2012 sulla resilienza ([1]) la Commissione individua una strategia per risalire alle cause delle crisi ricorrenti e per rendere gli aiuti più efficaci. La PAC ([2]) dell'Unione europea tiene conto degli interessi dei paesi in via di sviluppo in relazione al commercio di prodotti agricoli e alla politica interna. Le successive riforme politiche hanno permesso di istituire un sostegno interno al settore agricolo che, in linea di principio, non dà luogo a distorsioni della produzione o degli scambi. L'Unione europea ha posto al centro della politica commerciale relativa ai prodotti agricoli l'integrazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo nei mercati regionali e internazionali.

([1]) COM(2012)586 final.
([2]) Politica agricola comune.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003789/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: How can Europe make the most of Africa's growth?

Developing Africa is very important for global well-being, wealth and security. Often perceived as a land of hunger, disease and poverty, it is now changing its image. According to the most recent *World Economic Outlook* it hosts seven of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies, but needs the support of the West to accelerate its development process. A period of crisis such as the one currently taking place worldwide could be a suitable time to invest in a continent which offers many opportunities: for instance, an increase in agricultural productivity can pave the way to sustainable growth, hunger reduction and new job possibilities. In addition to this, it is essential to boost agriculture in order to make it a reliable export sector. To achieve this, market flexibility is an essential tenet, as well as coherent policies between African and European countries.

By following this approach, a negative impact on national economies and employment can be avoided and a well-balanced agreement reached.

Taking into consideration that:

— the European Union's protection of some sectors, particularly agriculture, through subsidies, make emerging countries unable to compete with EU products. This can cause the collapse of local markets;

— Article 208 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU) clearly states that the aim of development cooperation is to eradicate poverty and that EU trade policies shall only encourage and strengthen development efforts and not harm them;

I would ask the Commission:

— if it is going to help expand market opportunities;

— if it intends to foster national and international integration of developing countries;

— if it intends to promote cooperation between Africa and EU Member States, thereby trying not to leave African countries vulnerable to diseases, poverty and disasters.

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

Supporting Africa's economic growth and integration is a key objective of the 2007 EU-Africa Joint Strategy, which set up a partnership dealing specifically with regional integration and trade, including agriculture, as confirmed by the EU and African Union (AU) Commissions at their meeting on 26 April 2013.

In order to expand market access and support productive capacity and economic integration, the EU has concluded agreements with practically all African States, either bilaterally or within the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, and it is negotiating regional Economic Partnership Agreements. It unilaterally grants the Generalised System of Preferences to developing countries including the Everything but Arms scheme offering duty free and quota free market access to least developed countries. The EU remains by far the most important trading partner of sub-Saharan African countries, e.g. by importing 50% of their agricultural exports. Aid for trade provisions help our partners to benefit from the preferential market access. Africa is the main beneficiary of EU aid for trade (36% of the total including Member States in 2011).

The Commission shares the view that agriculture is a key sector in the fight to eradicate poverty. Its 2012 Communication on resilience ([1]) sets out a strategy to tackle the root causes of recurrent crises and make aid more efficient. The EU CAP ([2]) takes account of developing country interests both in trade in agricultural products and domestic policy. Successive policy reforms have resulted in domestic support for the agricultural sector that is essentially non-production or trade distorting. The EU has put the integration of developing countries into regional and international markets at the heart of agricultural trade policy.

([1]) COM(2012) 586 final.
([2]) Common Agricultural Policy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003790/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Fumo e dolore alla schiena: perché sono correlati e come affrontarli

Il nostro sistema respiratorio è dotato di cellule che sono in grado di bloccare l'ingresso di germi, polveri e altre sostanze nocive per la nostra salute. Il fumo di sigaretta che inaliamo passa da queste cellule e consente il passaggio di sostanze irritanti, danneggiando la barriera di protezione delle cellule stesse. Questo causa gravi danni all'apparato respiratorio. È stato stimato che nell'85 % dei casi di tumore al polmone riscontrato in soggetti maschi di circa quarant'anni, la diretta responsabilità è del fumo. Secondo uno studio pubblicato dal *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* e condotto da alcune note università statunitensi, il fumo aumenterebbe notevolmente anche le probabilità di soffrire di mal di schiena, in quanto danneggia il disco intervertebrale causando alterazioni della spina dorsale. La nicotina ha, infatti, un effetto disastroso sui dischi intervertebrali poiché contribuisce a infiammarli e ne danneggia la struttura. I ricercatori che si sono occupati del monitoraggio su 5333 pazienti per un periodo di otto mesi hanno verificato che il 32 % degli ex-fumatori e di coloro che non avevano mai fumato ha ottenuto una riduzione del dolore del 30 % in tempi più brevi rispetto ai fumatori (16 %). Preoccupa ancor di più il dato riportato dall'*Health Behaviour in School Children*, secondo il quale ben il 27 % degli studenti di scuola secondaria superiore che fumano soffre di mal schiena, mentre tra quelli delle scuole medie la percentuale è del 25 %.

Considerato che:

— il numero dei fumatori in Europa è in continuo aumento, tale che la media delle sigarette fumate annualmente da una persona ammonta a 1741;

— anche il fumo passivo può provocare problemi alla spina dorsale;

— il problema del fumo tocca in modo particolare gli adolescenti, i quali si trovano ad affrontare nuovi stili di vita e di condotta e i cui vissuti emotivi li accompagnano e ne influenzano le scelte insieme a una rinnovata immagine corporea;

— l'abitudine al fumo ha un impatto notevole sulla salute.

Sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

— se intenda incentivare ricerche scientifiche che possano dimostrare l'impatto specifico su organi diversi da quelli dell'apparato respiratorio;

— se ritenga essenziale promuovere progetti di educazione alla salute che aiutino a comprendere quanto i comportamenti legati alla salute in età adolescenziale influenzino lo stile di vita in età adulta.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

Tramite la strategia dell'UE per la gioventù la Commissione incoraggia uno stile di vita sano nei giovani, con particolare attenzione all'educazione alimentare, all'attività fisica e alla collaborazione tra scuole, educatori, operatori sanitari e organizzazioni sportive.

La Commissione promuove campagne di lotta al tabagismo dal 2002. Le prime, «Sentitevi liberi di dire no» e «HELP: per una vita senza fumo», erano rivolte prevalentemente agli adolescenti e incentrate sulla prevenzione, sull'abbandono del tabagismo e sul fumo passivo.

La campagna attuale «Gli ex fumatori sono irresistibili» è una naturale continuazione delle precedenti e sposta l'attenzione dai pericoli legati al fumo ai vantaggi dello smettere di fumare. Si rivolge in particolare a gruppi mirati della popolazione, come i giovani adulti, per sensibilizzarli sui pericoli connessi al tabagismo e incoraggiarli a smettere.

La campagna si avvale del monitoraggio e della consulenza di un gruppo di esperti nel campo della comunicazione e della salute pubblica che comprende figure provenienti da vari Stati membri e con background culturali e professionali diversi.

Per misurare l'impatto e l'efficacia della campagna sono regolarmente effettuati monitoraggi e valutazioni.

Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, negli ultimi anni sono stati finanziati diversi progetti con lo scopo di incoraggiare nei giovani e nella società uno stile di vita sano, basato tra le altre cose sull'attività fisica a vantaggio della salute (come lo sport), su una corretta alimentazione e sulla salute mentale. L'ultimo invito del 7° PQ comprendeva inoltre un argomento specifico su «Comprendere e controllare il dolore» («Understanding and controlling pain»), che potrebbe includere ricerche su fattori di rischio, biomarcatori e meccanismi del dolore alla schiena.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003790/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Smoking and back pain: what is the connection between them, and how can we tackle them?

Our respiratory system contains cells capable of blocking incoming germs, dust and other substances harmful to health. Inhaled cigarette smoke enters these cells, allowing irritants to pass through them and damaging the cells' protective walls. This causes serious harm to the respiratory system. It has been estimated that smoking is the direct cause of 85% of cases of lung cancer in males around 40 years of age. According to a study published in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, carried out by a number of leading American universities, smoking substantially increases the likelihood of suffering from back pain, since it damages the intervertebral discs of the spine. Nicotine has a disastrous effect on intervertebral discs, inflaming them and damaging their structure. The researchers, who monitored 5 333 patients over eight months, found that 32% of former smokers and those who had never smoked had a 30% decrease in pain in a shorter time than smokers (16%). Even more worrying is the data reported in *Health Behaviour in School Children*, which shows that as many as 27% of upper secondary school students who smoke suffer from back pain, while the percentage is 25% among middle school students.

— The number of smokers in Europe continues to rise, and the average number of cigarettes consumed per person per year is now 1 741.

— Passive smoking can damage the spine in the same way as for smokers themselves.

— The issue of smoking particularly affects adolescents, who find themselves having to deal with new lifestyles and ways of behaving, together with a new body image, and whose emotional experiences are ever-present and influence their choices;

— Habitual smoking has a substantial impact on health,

Can the Commission answer the following:

— Does it intend to encourage scientific research to demonstrate the specific impact of smoking on organs other than those of the respiratory system?

— Does it consider it essential to promote health education projects that would help people to understand the extent to which health-related behaviour in adolescence affects life as an adult?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Through its EU Youth Strategy, the Commission encourages healthy lifestyles for young people, particularly education on nutrition, physical activity and collaboration between schools, youth workers, health professionals and sporting organisations.

Since 2002 the Commission has promoted smoking cessation campaigns. The first campaign, 'Feel free to say no' and 'Help: For a life without tobacco' focused on smoking prevention, smoking cessation and passive smoking and targeted, in particular adolescence.

The current campaign 'Ex-smokers are Unstoppable' is a natural progression from these earlier campaigns and shifts the focus from the dangers of smoking to the advantages of quitting smoking. It pays particular attention to targeted population groups, such as young adults, to draw attention to the dangers of tobacco use, and to encourage smokers to quit.

A scientific panel of public health and communication experts, comprising members from different Member States and professional and cultural backgrounds, advises on and monitors the campaign throughout its duration.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the campaign is performed, with specific indicators, to measure impact and effectiveness.

Over the past years, various projects were funded through the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development with the aim of promoting a healthy lifestyle among youth and society, based amongst others, on health-enhancing physical activity, (including sport), adequate nutrition and mental health. In addition, the last FP7 call included a specific topic on 'Understanding and controlling pain', that may include research on risk factors, biomarkers and mechanisms of back pain.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003791/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Gestire la possibile sostituzione dei combustibili fossili con i CSS (combustibili solidi secondari) per una maggior tutela dell'ambiente

La salvaguardia dell'ambiente e della salute è uno dei principali e più scottanti temi che riguardano lo scenario europeo e internazionale. La consapevolezza di una divisione radicale tra gli industriali e i loro interessi economici, da un lato, e gli ambientalisti, dall'altro, è ormai un dato di fatto, come si può evincere dal provvedimento «*Utilizzo di combustibili solidi secondari*», sostenuto dal ministero dell'Ambiente italiano.

La possibilità di utilizzo dei combustibili solidi secondari (CSS) nei cementifici aprirebbe la strada a leggi più consone al rispetto dell'ambiente e in linea con il decreto legislativo 152 del 3 aprile 2006. La sostituzione di combustibili tradizionali con altri più alternativi è già una solida realtà in paesi quali la Germania (61 %), la Francia (45 %) e l'Olanda (98 %). Non è possibile affermare lo stesso a proposito dell'Italia, dove le procedure burocratiche sono piuttosto lente e i cittadini non sono stati sensibilizzati a sufficienza riguardo a certe tematiche.

Considerato che secondo gli esperti l'utilizzo dei combustibili solidi secondari comporterebbe una riduzione dell'uso delle discariche e della tassa sullo smaltimento dei rifiuti; che i combustibili solidi secondari permettono un maggior controllo dei cementifici e un attento monitoraggio delle sostanze inquinanti; che a prescindere da quanto detto finora il problema dell'inquinamento persiste,

può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— ritiene importante promuovere una campagna informativa riguardante i combustibili solidi secondari che possa concretizzarsi affinché questi possano diventare di dominio pubblico?

— Ritiene indispensabile omogeneizzare le realtà presenti nei vari paesi europei, soprattutto in merito all'impiego di combustibili solidi secondari?

— Ritiene possibile il raggiungimento, in futuro, di un utilizzo sempre più costante di materiali alternativi e rispettosi dell'ambiente?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione non prevede di promuovere una campagna informativa a livello di Unione e ritiene che ciò possa essere fatto a livello nazionale e/o regionale secondo le esigenze constatate dai singoli Stati membri.

La Commissione non ha in programma l'elaborazione di altre norme oltre a quelle stabilite dalla normativa UE in materia di emissioni industriali e incenerimento dei rifiuti ([1]).

Il recupero dell'energia è già una realtà in molte parti dell'UE. In base a Eurostat, nel 2011 il 18 % dei rifiuti urbani generati nell'Unione è stato destinato a incenerimento con recupero di energia. È tuttavia importante garantire che questo modo di gestione dei rifiuti non precluda il ricorso ad altre soluzioni, come il riuso e il riciclo, che, secondo la gerarchia dei rifiuti, sono da privilegiarsi.

([1]) Direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali (GU L 334 del 17.12.2010) e direttiva 2000/76/CE sull'incenerimento dei rifiuti (GU L 76 del 28.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003791/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Managing the possible replacement of fossil fuels with SRF (solid recovered fuel) to improve environmental protection

Protection of the environment and public health is one of the most burning issues on the European and international scene. Today, there is a deep divide between industrial companies and their economic interests, on the one hand, and environmentalists on the other, as can be seen from the 'Use of solid recovered fuel' measure backed by Italy's Environment Minister.

The possibility of using solid recovered fuel (SRF) in cement factories would open the way to laws that are more environmentally friendly and in line with Legislative Decree No 152 of 3 April 2006. The replacement of traditional fuels with other alternatives is already very much a reality in countries such as Germany (61%), France (45%) and the Netherlands (98%). The same cannot be said of Italy, where bureaucratic procedures are rather slow and the public has not been made sufficiently aware of certain issues.

According to experts, using solid recovered fuel would lead to a reduction in the use of landfills and lower waste disposal charges. Using solid recovered fuel allows for better control of cement factories and close monitoring of pollutants. Apart from all this, pollution continues to be a problem.

— Does the Commission consider it important to promote an information campaign to raise public awareness about solid recovered fuel?

— Does it consider it essential to standardise practices in the various countries of the EU, particularly with regard to the use of solid recovered fuel?

— Does it believe that, in the future, the use of environmentally friendly alternative fuels can become increasingly commonplace?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission does not envisage setting up an information campaign at EU level and believes that this can be done at the national and/or regional level depending on the needs ascertained in each case by the Member States.

The Commission does not plan to develop standards in addition to those set out by the EU legislation on industrial emissions and waste incineration ([1]).

Energy recovery is already an option widely used in the EU. According to Eurostat, in 2011 18% of the municipal waste generated in the EU was incinerated with energy recovery. It is nevertheless important to ensure that this waste management option does not hamper others such as reuse and recycling that rank higher in the waste hierarchy.

([1]) Directive 2010/75 on industrial emissions, OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, and Directive 2000/76/EC on the incineration of waste, OJ L 76, 28.12.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003792/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Persone autistiche: misure per favorire una migliore qualità della vita

L'autismo è una patologia psichica rientrante nel gruppo delle psicosi precoci che si manifesta entro i primi tre anni di età e comporta gravi difficoltà a restare a contatto con la realtà nonché deficit di comunicazione interpersonale. In Italia si conta un bambino autistico ogni 150 abitanti, mentre negli Stati membri un cittadino su dieci soffre di questa sindrome. A tutt'oggi sembra arduo o addirittura impossibile rintracciare le cause di questa patologia, che per il momento può essere affrontata solo con metodi e strumenti in grado di migliorare la vita delle persone che ne sono affette e dei loro familiari. Sebbene le pratiche di cura non siano ancora sufficienti, la tecnologia gioca un ruolo fondamentale per aiutare i bambini autistici a esprimersi e comunicare con le altre persone. In particolare, in Italia è stata recentemente ideata un'applicazione per *smartphone* e *tablet* che può aiutare i bambini nell'interazione con i docenti che li accompagnano durante il processo di apprendimento. L'importanza di questi dispositivi è notevole, perché i primi anni di vita sono decisivi per facilitare la comunicazione dei bambini autistici anche in età adulta.

Le persone autistiche hanno problemi di comportamento aggravati dalle loro difficoltà di comunicazione anche non verbale, tali che spesso i loro sentimenti ed emozioni rimangono inespressi, e sono colpite anche da problemi di salute dovuti agli effetti collaterali generati dai farmaci che assumono. Manca ancora una capillare diffusione sul territorio europeo di strutture dedicate, sebbene la Carta dei diritti delle persone con autismo, adottata dal Parlamento europeo nel maggio 1996, precisi tutti i diritti delle persone autistiche. Inoltre, a dispetto di diversi progetti intesi a tener conto della vulnerabilità dei soggetti autistici, quale il progetto Daphne presentato dalla Commissione nel 1998, sono ricorrenti i casi di violenza e maltrattamenti nei confronti di persone autistiche di ogni età.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— intende incentivare la ricerca scientifica, farmaceutica e neuropsicologica, al fine di comprendere quali siano le cause scatenanti questa patologia e quali possano essere cure efficaci?

— Intende promuovere iniziative che consentano la comunicazione intergenerazionale e che sensibilizzino i cittadini a proposito delle problematiche relative all'autismo?

— Ritiene opportuno definire linee guida per garantire una vita più serena e dignitosa alle persone affette da autismo e ai loro familiari?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

Come richiesto dal Parlamento europeo, la Commissione prevede di indire nel 2013 un bando per un'azione pilota «Protocollo europeo sulla prevalenza dell'autismo per la diagnosi precoce dello spettro autistico in Europa». Quest'azione pilota intende migliorare la qualità della vita delle persone affette da disordini dello spettro autistico e delle loro famiglie. Essa definirà linee guida per l'identificazione precoce e la diagnosi corretta dei bambini con disordini dello spettro autistico e per la predisposizione di interventi tempestivi al fine di assicurare risultati ottimali.

L'azione pilota prenderà le mosse dalle attività condotte in precedenza in materia di autismo che hanno ricevuto il sostegno dei programmi Salute dell'UE. Tra essi vi sono i progetti «Sistema europeo di informazione sull'autismo» (2006-2009), la «Rete europea di controllo dei fattori di rischio per l'autismo e la paralisi cerebrale» (2008-2010) e la «European Autism Action Conference» (Conferenza europea per l'azione relativa all'autismo) tenutasi a Dublino (2010).

Il Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo (7PQ) ha sostenuto la ricerca legata ai disordini dello spettro autistico erogando, a partire dal 2007, più di 50 milioni di euro. In particolare il progetto EU-AIMS ([1]), sostenuto dall'Impresa comune per l'attuazione dell'iniziativa tecnologica congiunta sui medicinali innovativi ([2]), si prefigge di approfondire le conoscenze sui disordini dello spettro autistico e di sviluppare approcci terapeutici su misura per soddisfare i bisogni dei singoli pazienti. Questo progetto, che alla fine potrebbe sfociare in una nuova classificazione dei pazienti, rappresenta uno sforzo senza precedenti cui partecipano diverse società farmaceutiche e istituzioni universitarie di tutta Europa nonché le organizzazioni dei pazienti.

([1]) http://www.eu-aims.eu/.

([2]) L'IMI è un partenariato pubblico-privato tra l'UE e la Federazione europea delle associazioni delle industrie farmaceutiche (http://www.imi.europa.eu/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003792/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Autistic people: measures to promote a better quality of life

Autism is a mental disorder classed in the group of early psychoses, which manifests in the first three years of life and leads to serious difficulties in staying in touch with reality, as well as interpersonal communication deficits. In Italy, there is one autistic child for every 150 people, while in the other Member States one person in ten suffers from this syndrome. At present, it is difficult or even impossible to identify the causes of this illness, which for the time being can only be dealt with by methods and tools to improve the lives of sufferers and their families. Although the available treatments are not yet adequate, technology plays a fundamental role in helping autistic children to express themselves and communicate with others. In particular, an application for smartphones and tablet devices has recently been designed in Italy that can help children interact with the teachers who support them during the learning process. These devices are of considerable importance, since the first years of life are decisive in facilitating autistic children's communication as adults too.

Autistic people have behavioural problems aggravated by their difficulties with communication, including non-verbal communication, so that often their feelings and emotions are not expressed. They also suffer from health problems due to side-effects from the medication they take. There has not yet been any widespread introduction of specialised structures in the EU, even though the Declaration on the Rights of People with Autism, adopted by the Parliament in May 1996, specifies all the rights of autistic people. Furthermore, despite various projects that aim to take account of the vulnerable state of autistic people, such as the Daphne project presented by the Commission in 1998, violence and abuse against autistic people of all ages is a recurring problem.

— Does it intend to encourage scientific, pharmaceutical and neuropsychological research in order to discover what causes this illness and how it might be effectively treated?

— Does it intend to promote initiatives that allow intergenerational communication and raise public awareness of issues related to autism?

— Does it believe it appropriate to establish guidelines to ensure an easier and more dignified life for autistic people and their families?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

As requested by the European Parliament, the Commission plans to launch a call for a pilot action on a 'European Prevalence Protocol for early detection of Autistic Spectrum Disorders in Europe' in 2013. This pilot action will seek to improve the quality of life of individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders. It will establish guidelines on the early identification and correct diagnosis of children with autism spectrum disorders and the provision of early interventions to assure best outcomes.

The pilot action will build on earlier activities on autism supported by the EU-Health Programmes. These included the projects 'European Autism Information System' (2006- 2009), the network 'European Network for Surveillance of Risk Factors on Autism and Cerebral Palsy' (2008-2010) and the 'European Autism Action Conference' in Dublin (2010).

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7) has supported research related to autism spectrum disorders with more than EUR 50 million since 2007. In particular, the project EU-AIMS ([1]), supported by the Innovative Medicines Initiative Joint Undertaking ([2]) aims to get deeper insight into autism spectrum disorders and to develop therapeutic approaches tailored to individual patient needs. This project, which may ultimately result in a new classification of patients, is an unprecedented effort gathering several pharmaceutical companies and academic institutions across Europe as well as patient organisations.

([1]) http://www.eu-aims.eu/.
([2]) IMI is a public-private partnership between the EU and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (http://www.imi.europa.eu/).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003793/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Misure al fine di diminuire il consumo di bibite gassate all'interno degli Stati europei

Secondo uno studio effettuato dall'American Heart Association ogni anno si contano 180 000 morti nel mondo a causa dell'elevato e assiduo consumo di bibite gassate; 133 000 sono colpiti da diabete, 44 000 da malattie cardiovascolari e 6 000 da cancro. Le bibite sono in effetti ipercaloriche, contengono acqua e zucchero, dunque si tratta di calorie vuote, sono prive di qualsiasi nutrimento, accrescono di molto l'introito calorico del pasto, non contribuiscono al senso di sazietà e fanno ingrassare di più rispetto a quelle assimilate attraverso il cibo. Inoltre, se accompagnate da cibi sapidi, non dissetano a sufficienza e si tende a berne molte di più. Si pensi che annualmente in Italia si consumano 50 litri di bibite a persona, quantità piuttosto bassa rispetto ai 102 del Belgio e agli 82 della Spagna. Nel 2008 in Italia il 41 % dei bambini assumeva bibite gassate/zuccherate almeno una volta al giorno, percentuale che è salita al 48 % nel 2010.

Le bibite gassate aumentano anche il rischio di obesità e di rallentamento del metabolismo. La proposta avanzata dal Ministero della Salute italiano di tassare le bibite gassate e zuccherate, che avrebbe previsto un contributo di 7,16 EUR ogni 100 litri a carico dei produttori per un periodo di tre anni, da destinare alla prevenzione, non è diventata legge.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— quali misure intende adottare in merito al problema del consumo di bibite negli Stati membri;

— se ritenga opportuno proporre misure finanziarie che possano disincentivare l'acquisto in grandi quantità, da parte delle famiglie europee, di bibite gassate, al fine di tutelare la loro stessa salute;

— se ritiene importante educare la popolazione europea a una sana cultura alimentare di cui, quanto a bevande, l'acqua possa essere l'assoluta protagonista e che preveda inoltre la costante abitudine di leggere le etichette alimentari prima di acquistare qualsiasi prodotto?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

Dal 2007 la Commissione europea collabora con gli Stati membri e le parti interessate dell'UE per promuove inziative a livello d'Unione volte ad incoraggiare un'alimentazione più sana, in linea con quanto definito dalla Strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]).

La strategia è attuata tramite il Gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([2]) e la Piattaforma d'azione europea per l'alimentazione, l'attività fisica e la salute ([3]). Nel Gruppo ad alto livello la Commissione opera in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri riguardo a questioni quali la riformulazione dei prodotti alimentari. Nell'ambito della Piattaforma europea la Commissione incoraggia le parti interessate dell'UE a collaborare in modo concreto ad iniziative in tema di alimentazione e attività fisica. Gli operatori del settore sono ad esempio invitati a riformulare i prodotti alimentari e le bevande non alcoliche, così come a ridurne le porzioni.

La Commissione ritiene che le etichette alimentari contribuiscano notevolmente a migliorare l'informazione del consumatore in rapporto alle scelte alimentari, che fanno anch'esse parte della strategia. Al momento la Commissione non intende tuttavia proporre misure finanziarie sulle bibite gassate.

([1]) COM(2007)279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003793/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Measures to reduce the consumption of fizzy drinks in the EU Member States

According to a study by the American Heart Association, high and regular consumption of fizzy drinks is responsible for more than 180 000 deaths worldwide every year. Of these deaths, 133 000 are caused by diabetes, 44 000 by cardiovascular diseases, and 6 000 by cancer. These drinks are extremely high in calories and they contain water and sugar, so the calories are 'empty'. In other words, they have no nutritional value, greatly increase the calorific intake of meals and do not help satisfy the appetite, while also being more fattening than the calories absorbed from food. Furthermore, they are insufficiently thirst-quenching when drunk with savoury foods, so there is a tendency to drink a lot more of them. The estimated annual per capita consumption of these drinks in Italy is 50 litres — quite a low figure compared with 102 litres in Belgium and 82 in Spain. In 2008, 41% of Italian children drank fizzy drinks at least once a day. In 2010, this figure rose to 48%.

Fizzy drinks also increase the risk of obesity and metabolic slowing. The Italian Health Minister's proposal to tax fizzy and sugary drinks — which would have required manufacturers to pay a levy of EUR 7.16 on every 100 litres for three years, to be spent on prevention — has not been passed into law.

— What action will the Commission take to tackle the problem of fizzy drink consumption in the Member States?

— Does it think it should propose financial measures that might discourage European families from buying large quantities of fizzy drinks, in order to protect their health?

— Does it think it is important to educate the European population about a healthy food culture in which water can be the primary drink, and which also instils the constant habit of reading the label before buying any food product?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Since 2007, the European Commission has promoted EU action to promote healthier diets as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health issues ([1]) — including through partnerships with Member States and EU Stakeholders.

The strategy is implemented through the High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2]) and the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([3]). In the High Level Group, the Commission works closely with Member States on issues such as food reformulation. In the EU Platform, the Commission encourages EU stakeholders to commit to concrete actions on diet and physical activity; industry partners are for example encouraged to engage in the reformulation of food and non-alcoholic beverages and in reducing portion size.

The Commission considers nutrition labelling has an important role in improving consumer information in regards to food choices, which is also part of the strategy. However, the Commission is not considering at the moment to propose financial measures on fizzy drinks.

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003794/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Spiaggiamento di delfini in Toscana

Nelle ultime settimane si sono succeduti in Toscana numerosi casi di delfini morti per spiaggiamento, ben 25 dall'inizio dell'anno.

Già nel 2012 si erano verificati 35 spiaggiamenti durante il corso di tutto l'anno, il dato più alto registrato in Toscana dal 1986. Per l'anno 2013 la cifra sembra purtroppo destinata a un considerevole incremento, con conseguenze disastrose oltre che per la popolazione stessa di delfini anche per l'intero ecosistema marino del Tirreno, in un'area che è inoltre tutelata a livello ambientale internazionale e comunemente nota come «Santuario dei cetacei».

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questa vicenda?

Quali misure sono previste per monitorare e tutelare la presenza di delfini nelle nostre acque marine?

Ritiene possibile che queste continue morti siano legate a un cattivo stato di salute delle zone marine interessate?

Molti spiaggiamenti sono avvenuti in prossimità dell'area teatro dell'incidente occorso all'Eurocargo Venezia nel dicembre 2011, che ha comportato la perdita in mare di diversi fusti tossici, in parte non ancora recuperati: vi possono essere dei legami tra le due vicende?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente del numero insolitamente elevato di spiaggiamenti di stenelle striate lungo le coste del Mar Tirreno. Attualmente, con il sostegno delle autorità italiane, sono ancora in corso gli esami per determinare la causa di queste morti, pertanto la Commissione non può sapere se sono riconducibili allo stato delle acque marine o all'incidente all'Eurocargo di Venezia.

Conformemente alle disposizioni della direttiva 92/43/CEE (direttiva Habitat) ([1]), gli Stati membri sono tenuti a monitorare lo stato di conservazione delle specie contemplate dalla direttiva, tra cui i cetacei (e quindi anche i delfini). Gli Stati membri devono inoltre adottare i provvedimenti di cui all'articolo 12, atti ad istituire un regime di rigorosa tutela dei cetacei. Inoltre, nel quadro stabilito dalla direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino (direttiva 2008/56/CE) ([2]), gli Stati membri sono chiamati a stabilire e attuare, entro luglio 2014, un programma di monitoraggio finalizzato a valutare gli obiettivi per raggiungere un buono stato ecologico entro il 2020, ivi incluso lo stato dei mammiferi marini nelle loro regioni e sottoregioni. Ciascuno Stato membro dovrà pertanto garantire che sia stabilito lo stato dell'ambiente marino nelle zone che rientrano nella propria giurisdizione e che le pressioni cui è esposto siano individuate chiaramente prima di adottare le opportune misure di gestione.

([1]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 1992, relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche, GU L 206 del 22.7.1992, pag. 7.
([2]) GU L 164 del 25.6.2008, pag. 19.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003794/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Beaching of dolphins in Tuscany

There have been numerous cases of dolphins dying as a result of beaching in Tuscany in recent weeks: as many as 25 since the beginning of the year.

In 2012, 35 beachings occurred over the whole year, the highest number recorded in Tuscany since 1986. Unfortunately in 2013, the number seems destined to rise considerably, with disastrous consequences not just for the dolphin population, but also for the entire marine ecosystem of the Tyrrhenian Sea, in an area which is, moreover, protected at international environmental level and is commonly known as the 'Cetacean Sanctuary'.

Is the Commission aware of this matter?

What measures are envisaged to monitor and protect the presence of dolphins in our marine waters?

Does it believe that these continuous deaths could be linked to the health of the marine areas concerned?

Many cases of beaching have occurred near the area of the *Eurocargo Venezia* incident of December 2011 in which several toxic-waste drums were lost at sea, some of which have not yet been recovered; could the two situations be related?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the unusually high number of striped dolphin strandings along the Italian coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea. The causes of the deaths are still being investigated with the support of the Italian authorities, and the Commission therefore cannot say if they are linked to the health of the marine waters or to the Eurocargo Venezia incident.

According to the provisions of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) the Member States are required to monitor the conservation status of species covered by the directive, including all cetaceans such as dolphins; furthermore, Member States have to implement measures laid down in Article 12 for the strict protection of cetaceans. Moreover, within the framework laid down by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC) ([2]), Member States shall establish and implement, by July 2014, a monitoring programme in order to assess the targets set to achieve good environmental status by 2020, including the status of the marine mammals within their (sub) regions. Each Member State will therefore have to ensure that the status of the marine environment in the areas under its jurisdiction is established and that the pressures leading to such status are clearly identified as a step prior to the adoption of proper management measures.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.
([2]) OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19-40.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003795/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Alcool e antidepressivi tra i giovanissimi

Si osserva un tragico e preoccupante aumento dell'abuso di alcool e di antidepressivi o eccitanti da parte di giovanissimi dai 12 ai 14/15 anni.

Inoltre, va tenuto presente che spesso questi giovanissimi sono ricoverati per la perdita di conoscenza e alcune volte per coma etilico.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se il fenomeno è monitorato e se la Commissione è in possesso di dati che provengano dai singoli Stati europei;

2. se non ritenga opportuno invitare gli Stati membri sia ad una campagna di prevenzione rivolta ai giovanissimi che alle famiglie e inserire nei percorsi scolastici, fin dalle scuole primarie, una serie di lezioni che illustrino i danni causati dall'abuso di alcool, di sostanze antidepressive e stupefacenti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a prendere visione della risposta all'interrogazione E-9333/2012 per i dati provenienti dagli Stati membri. Per quanto concerne le iniziative rivolte ai giovani, la Commissione rinvia alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni E-9022/2012, E 7287/2012 ed E-2637/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003795/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Abuse of alcohol and antidepressants by the very young

We are witnessing a tragic and worrying rise in the abuse of alcohol and antidepressants or stimulants among children between the ages of 12 and 14/15.

These young people are frequently hospitalised for falling unconscious, and sometimes for alcoholic coma.

1. Is the Commission monitoring this issue and does it have any figures from individual EU Member States?

2. Does the Commission not think it should call on the Member States to roll out a prevention campaign aimed at young people and families, and to incorporate a series of lessons into school curricula — from primary school onwards — to illustrate the harm caused by the abuse of alcohol, antidepressants and narcotics?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to question E-9333/2012 for information regarding data collection from Member States. As regard actions focussed on young people, the Commission refers to its respective answers to questions E-9022/2012, E-7287/2012 and E-2637/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003797/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(4 april 2013)

Betreft: Betere en beter begrijpelijke informatie voor spaarders

Tijdens een toespraak op 29 maart 2013 ([1]) heeft Klaas Knot, president van de Nederlandse Bank en lid van de raad van bestuur van de Europese Centrale Bank, verklaard dat de EU-benadering van de reddingsoperatie voor Cyprus „onderdeel van het Europese liquidatiebeleid" zal zijn. Deze verklaring staat haaks op de uitspraak van Benoit Coeure op 26 maart 2013 dat Cyprus een uniek geval is ([2]), alsook op hetgeen Olli Rehn op 16 maart 2013 heeft gezegd, namelijk dat „er geen concreet geval is waarin [een toekomstige, door de EU-gemandateerde bankenheffing] zou moeten worden overwogen" ([3]).

Aangezien de risico's voor klanten door de financiële crisis van 2008 en de toegenomen volatiliteit van de financiële markten significant zijn veranderd, en in overeenstemming met artikel 169 van het Verdrag betreffende werking van de Europese Unie, waarin staat dat de Unie „bijdraagt tot de bescherming van […] de economische belangen van de consumenten, alsmede tot de bevordering van hun recht op voorlichting […] om hun belangen te behartigen", zou elke burger in de eurozone het recht moeten hebben te worden geïnformeerd over de financiële positie van zijn of haar bank, en over de veranderingen van de structuur en de activiteiten daarvan.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven of de heer Knot al dan niet gelijk heeft wanneer hij zegt dat de EU-benadering van de reddingsoperatie voor Cyprus een blauwdruk zal zijn voor de aanpak van eventuele andere financiële crises in de eurozone?

2. Deelt de Commissie mijn opvatting dat burgers in de eurozone het recht moeten hebben beter en begrijpelijker te worden geïnformeerd over de financiële positie van hun bank — mogelijkerwijs van dag tot dag — teneinde een goede inschatting te kunnen maken van de risico's?

3. Zo ja, kan de Commissie in detail aangeven welke maatregelen, voorstellen en/of instrumenten haar voor ogen staan om deze uitdaging aan te gaan?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(3 juni 2013)

Cyprus is een uniek geval wegens de omvang van de bankensector in combinatie met de structuur ervan, en het feit dat te veel risico's zijn genomen en het toezicht suboptimaal is. De maatregelen die zijn genomen, zijn toegesneden op de erg uitzonderlijke situatie in Cyprus en zijn gericht op het herstel van de levensvatbaarheid van een kleinere bankensector en tegelijkertijd ook op de bescherming van alle deposito's onder de 100 000 euro, overeenkomstig de EU-beginselen.

Alle crediteuren van een bank, met inbegrip van de depositohouders, hebben recht op duidelijke informatie over de financiële situatie van elke bank waar zij zaken mee doen. Er bestaat EU-wetgeving met betrekking tot de vereisten van openbaarmaking voor banken. Bovendien werkt de EBA aan een betere vergelijkbaarheid van deze vereisten tussen banken. De Commissie staat volledig achter dit initiatief.

([1]) http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20130329-701526.html
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/084a10ca-95fe-11e2-b8dd-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2POmZ5yfZ.
([3]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_16/03/2013_488173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003797/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(4 April 2013)

Subject: Better and clearer information for savers

Mr Klaas Knot, President of *De Nederlandsche Bank* and a member of the Governing Council of the European Central Bank, said in a speech on 29 March 2013 ([1]) that the EU approach to handling the Cyprus bail-out 'will be part of the European liquidation policy'. This statement actually equates to saying that savings accounts will be partly 'confiscated' and contradicts Mr Benoit Cœure's statement of 26 March to the effect that Cyprus is a unique case ([2]), as well as Mr Olli Rehn's speech of 16 March, when he said that 'there is no concrete case where [a future EU-mandated bank levy] should be considered' ([3]).

Since the risks encountered by customers have seriously and substantially changed following the financial crisis of 2008 and the increased volatility of the financial markets, every citizen in the eurozone should have the right to be informed about the financial conditions of his/her bank and the changes occurring in its structure and activities, particularly in the investment portfolio and in line with Article 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, according to which 'the Union shall contribute to protecting the […] economic interests of consumers, as well as to promoting their right to information […] in order to safeguard their interests'.

In light of the above:

1. Can the Commission say whether Mr Knot is right or wrong in affirming that the EU approach to the Cyprus bail-out will be a template for handling other possible financial crises in the eurozone?

2. Does the Commission agree that citizens across the eurozone should have the right to better and clearer information about the financial situation of their banks — possibly on a day-to-day basis — in order to be able to properly carry out their risk assessments?

3. If so, can the Commission clarify what kind of actions, proposals and/or tools it envisages to address this challenge?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures taken are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with the EU principles.

All creditors of a bank, including its depositors, have the right to clear information regarding the financial situation of any bank they choose to deal with. There is existing EU legislation regarding the disclosure requirements of banks and the EBA is working to enhance the comparability of these requirements across banks. The Commission fully supports this initiative.

([1]) http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20130329-701526.html
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/084a10ca-95fe-11e2-b8dd-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2POmZ5yfZ.
([3]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_16/03/2013_488173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003799/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Pastor Nadarkhani

Further to my previous written question, E-003318/2012, could the High Representative give an update with regard to the action being taken by the European Union in relation to the unlawful arrest of Pastor Nadarkhani in Iran in 2009?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Since the arrest of Pastor Nadarkhani, the HR/VP has issued numerous statements and declarations advocating his case. The latest HR/VP statement was issued in February 2012, calling on Iranian authorities to immediately release Pastor Nadarkhani. Moreover, the case of Pastor Nadarkhani has been raised in meetings with Iranian authorities in Iran and in Brussels.

In September 2012, the HR/VP welcomed the release of Pastor Nadarkhani, after three years of incarceration. The EU will continue to call for the respect of freedom of religion and belief in Iran in line with Iran's international obligations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003800/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sanctions on the Foreign Trade Bank of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The United States recently decided to impose sanctions on the Foreign Trade Bank of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, following nuclear tests carried out by Kim Jong-un's regime and an escalation in belligerence by the DPRK towards the United States and the Republic of Korea, two of the European Union's closest partners.

Given the unacceptable moves by the DPRK to threaten our allies and to destabilise the Korean Peninsula, will the EU consider imposing sanctions on the Foreign Trade Bank? If not, why not?

I already take note of the Council Decision of 8 March 2013 to strengthen restrictive measures banning the sale, supply or transfer of goods to the DPRK which could contribute to its weapons of mass destruction.

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The EU last strengthened its restrictive measures against the DPRK on 22 April 2013, giving effect to the measures of UN Security Council resolution 2094. That means that 29 persons and 35 entities are currently subject to EU sanctions (partly UN and partly autonomous designations). The EU may consider possible additional autonomous measures, including financial measures, beyond the UN package. No decision has yet been taken on the content of such a package.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003801/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: Food aid and humanitarian assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

European Commission food aid and humanitarian assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is propping up a dangerous and repressive regime.

1. Can the Commission provide the latest statistics for the disbursement of food aid and funding for other humanitarian projects in 2012?

2. Have any funds or donations in kind been committed or pre-allocated for 2013? If so, please provide details of these commitments. How much aid has been disbursed so far in 2013?

3. Following nuclear tests by the repressive regime of Kim Jong-un and an escalation in belligerence towards the United States and the Republic of Korea, two of the EU's closest partners, will the Commission consider suspending all humanitarian aid to this aggressive dictatorship?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The EU's assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is limited to humanitarian aid interventions. This includes the provision of assistance under the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development component of the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP).

In 2012, the FSTP has allocated EUR 6 million for food security projects in the DPRK and EUR 13 million have been pre-allocated for 2013. Small scale humanitarian emergency relief operations for a total amount of EUR 325 000 were also implemented in 2012 in response to floods in Central and Eastern provinces of the country.

The objective of these interventions is to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable, such as children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, the elderly and the disabled. EU humanitarian aid is delivered in line with people's needs and according to the principles of humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality. These actions are implemented by international Non-governmental Organisations and not through the Government of the DPRK. The EU does not provide any assistance to the Government of the DPRK. The EU distinguishes between the regime and the population. In order to ensure that relief items reach the intended beneficiaries, strict monitoring measures are carefully applied.

The EU will continue to closely monitor the humanitarian situation in DPRK.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003802/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 april 2013)

Betreft: Beperkingen van het vrije verkeer van kapitaal in Cyprus

Op 21 maart 2013 verklaarde Jeroen Dijsselbloem tijdens zijn eerste hoorzitting in het Europees Parlement dat beperkingen van het vrije verkeer van kapitaal in het licht van de aanhoudende bankencrisis volledig in overeenstemming zijn met het Verdrag.

Op 25 maart 2013 verklaarde de Eurogroep dat de administratieve maatregelen inzake kapitaalcontroles „tijdelijk, proportioneel en niet-discriminerend zullen zijn en overeenkomstig het Verdrag onderworpen zullen worden aan strikt toezicht betreffende de omvang en de duur" ([1]). Later voegde commissaris Barnier eraan toe dat „elke maatregel om het vrije verkeer te begrenzen of te beperken slechts uitzonderlijk en tijdelijk mag zijn" ([2]).

Kan de Commissie in het licht van deze verklaringen antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Zijn beperkingen van het vrije verkeer van kapitaal wettelijk of onwettelijk, aangezien ze gelden voor een gehele lidstaat en niet enkel voor banken in moeilijkheden?

2. Indien deze beperkingen wettelijk zijn, is het dan mogelijk dat zelfs grondbeginselen van de rechtsorde van de EU, zoals het vrije verkeer van kapitaal, dat is vastgelegd in artikel 26, lid 2, van het Verdrag, kunnen worden beperkt?

3. Indien deze beperkingen wettelijk zijn en zelfs kunnen worden toegepast op grondbeginselen, in welke omstandigheden en op welke voorwaarden kan dit dan?

4. Indien deze beperkingen onwettelijk zijn, overweegt de Commissie dan de verklaring van de heer Dijsselbloem als onjuist te bestempelen, aangezien ze suggereert dat deze beperkingen volledig in overeenstemming zijn met het Verdrag?

5. Kan de Commissie een definitie van het begrip „bankencrisis" geven, aangezien deze beperkingen niet enkel gelden voor de Laiki Bank en de Bank of Cyprus?

6. Is de Commissie van mening dat spaarders en beleggers zich de afgelopen maanden bewust waren van de aanhoudende bankencrisis in Cyprus?

7. Kunnen andere fundamentele vrijheden eveneens aan beperkingen worden onderworpen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(6 juni 2013)

De Cypriotische autoriteiten hebben besloten om, gezien de noodsituatie, beperkingen op banktransacties in te voeren (beperkingen op opnames, beperkingen op de vroegtijdige beëindiging van deposito's, en andere banktransacties). Dergelijke maatregelen vormen een beperking van het vrije verkeer van kapitaal. Overeenkomstig artikel 65 VWEU mogen lidstaten echter onder bepaalde voorwaarden dergelijke beperkingen opleggen, zolang deze proportioneel, niet-discriminerend en tijdelijk zijn. Soortgelijke uitzonderingen zijn van toepassing op andere fundamentele vrijheden uit hoofde van het Verdrag.

De Commissie erkent dat, gezien de uitzonderlijke situatie in Cyprus en het aanzienlijke risico op een oncontroleerbare uitstroom van deposito's, dergelijke tijdelijke beperkingen op kapitaalbewegingen gerechtvaardigd waren om redenen van groot openbaar belang teneinde een instorting van het financiële stelsel van Cyprus te voorkomen.

Als hoedster van het Verdrag, volgt de Commissie deze op EU-niveau ongekende situatie op de voet en zal zij erop aandringen dat de looptijd van deze maatregelen niet langer is dan nodig en dat de maatregelen geleidelijk aan worden versoepeld en opgeheven teneinde het vrije verkeer van kapitaal zo snel mogelijk te herstellen. Met het oog hierop is een controlestructuur opgezet.

De EU-wetgeving bevat geen definitie van het begrip „bankencrisis".

([1]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://www.euractiv.com/euro-finance/cyprus-banks-open-thursday-remai-news-518734

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003802/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on free movement of capital in Cyprus

On 21 March 2013, in his first hearing in the European Parliament, Jeroen Dijsselbloem stated that restrictions on free movement of capital were fully compatible with the Treaty, given the ongoing banking crisis.

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup stated that the administrative measures concerning capital controls 'will be temporary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, as well as subject to strict monitoring in terms of scope and duration in line with the Treaty' ([1]). Commissioner Barnier later added that 'any measures to restrict or limit freedom of movement may only be enacted exceptionally and temporarily' ([2]).

In the light of these statements, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Are restrictions on free movement of capital legal or illegal, given that they apply to a whole Member State, not just to troubled banks?

2. If such restrictions are legal, is it possible that even fundamental principles of the EU legal order, such as the free movement of capital, as established by Article 26(2), may be subject to restriction?

3. If such restrictions are legal and may even be applied to fundamental principles, under what circumstances and conditions can this happen?

4. If such restrictions are illegal, would the Commission consider dismissing Mr Dijsselbloem's statement as incorrect, given its suggestion that these restrictions are fully compatible with the Treaty?

5. Could the Commission provide a definition of 'banking crisis', given that these restrictions are not limited to Laiki Bank and the Bank of Cyprus?

6. Is the Commission of the opinion that savers and investors were aware of the ongoing banking crisis in Cyprus over the last couple of months?

7. Could other fundamental freedoms be subject to restriction as well?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Cypriot authorities decided to introduce emergency restrictions on banking operations (limits on withdrawals, restrictions on early termination of deposits and other banking operations). Such restrictions constitute a limitation of the free movement of capital. However, under Article 65 TFEU, Member States are allowed to impose such restrictions under certain conditions and as long as they are proportionate, non-discriminatory and temporary. Similar exceptions apply in the context of the other fundamental freedoms under the Treaty.

The Commission acknowledges that, taking into account the exceptional situation in Cyprus and the significant risk of an uncontrollable outflow of deposits, such temporary restrictions on capital movements were justified in light of the overriding public interest to prevent the collapse of the financial system of Cyprus.

The Commission, as a guardian of the Treaty, is closely monitoring the situation which is unprecedented at EU level, and will insist that these measures last no longer than necessary and are gradually relaxed and lifted with the view to reinstating the free movement of capital as rapidly as possible. A monitoring structure has been put in place to that end.

As regards the definition of a 'banking crisis', there is no such definition in EU legislation.

([1]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://www.euractiv.com/euro-finance/cyprus-banks-open-thursday-remai-news-518734.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003803/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Il futuro della politica europea a favore delle regioni di montagna

Definite «la colonna vertebrale ecologica dell'Unione», le montagne rappresentano per l'Europa un patrimonio storico da preservare e una risorsa strategica da rilanciare nel futuro in chiave di sostenibilità e potenziamento delle sue peculiarità strutturali. In questo difficile momento di crisi, per le loro caratteristiche uniche che si declinano in altrettanti problemi specifici, le montagne chiedono all'Europa un'attenta riflessione finalizzata a comprendere come intervenire in modo mirato e davvero efficace sulle loro necessità.

Preso atto che le montagne occupano il 41,3 % del territorio europeo e ospitano il 25.4 % della sua popolazione; considerato che la normativa sugli aiuti «de minimis» contenuta nel regolamento (CE) n. 1998/2006 stabilisce che solo gli aiuti inferiori a 200 mila euro sono dispensati dall'obbligo di notifica preventiva alla Commissione europea; preso atto che, in tema di aiuti di Stato alle imprese, l'articolo 107 del TFUE stabilisce che tali aiuti sono destinati a promuovere lo sviluppo regionale e possono, a talune condizioni, considerarsi compatibili con il mercato interno; considerato che attualmente si possono concedere aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale unicamente ad attività economiche situate in zone svantaggiate, selezionate in base a criteri oggettivi (PIL e disoccupazione); preso atto che gli attuali orientamenti in materia di aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale 2007-2013 scadranno il 31 dicembre 2013;

si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. quali e quante risorse intende mettere a disposizione nella prossima programmazione 2014-2020 per tutelare le regioni di montagna, il loro patrimonio naturale ed economico e le loro peculiarità, rilanciandone le potenzialità nell'ottica di un ammodernamento strutturale onde consentire loro di affrontare la crisi che ne minaccia la sopravvivenza?

2. ha considerato l'ipotesi di trasformare le aree montane in uno specifico settore di intervento, quale quello primario, dove la soglia «de minimis» non venga applicata?

3. intende rivedere le regole degli aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale affinché tengano maggiormente conto delle specificità delle zone di montagna, includendo tra i criteri di selezione delle zone svantaggiate non solo il PIL e la disoccupazione, ma anche gli svantaggi naturali permanenti e/o la circostanza in base alla quale in certe aree di montagna — quali quelle rientranti nella rete europea «Natura 2000» — sussiste un interesse internazionale, europeo e nazionale nel garantire la preservazione dell'eccezionale patrimonio naturale?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

1. L'accordo sul quadro finanziario pluriennale (QFP) ([1]) e la proposta di regolamento recante disposizioni comuni riferiti al periodo 2014-2020 non destinano finanziamenti specifici a favore delle regioni di montagna. L'articolo 111 della proposta di regolamento sopra menzionata concede tuttavia una modulazione dei tassi di cofinanziamento per quanto riguarda le zone di montagna. L'ammontare delle quote destinate a tali regioni per il periodo 2014-2020 dipenderà quindi dai programmi futuri proposti dagli Stati membri e dalle regioni.

2. La questione delle regioni di montagna può essere oggetto di programmi specifici degli Stati membri. Si ritiene che tale soluzione sia tra le migliori se si vuole tener conto delle peculiarità delle regioni interessate. Il regolamento n. 1998/2006 della Commissione (regolamento de minimis), attualmente in fase di revisione presso la Commissione, non contiene alcuna disposizione specifica riguardo alle regioni di montagna. La Commissione ha avviato una consultazione pubblica ([2]) aperta fino al 15 maggio 2015.

([1]) Consiglio europeo del 7 e dell'8 febbraio 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_de_minimis/index_en.html

3. La Commissione sta riesaminando gli orientamenti in materia di aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale. I nuovi orientamenti dovrebbero entrare in vigore nel 2014. Secondo quanto stabilito nella proposta della Commissione discussa con gli Stati membri e pubblicata nel febbraio 2013, i criteri di selezione delle aree assistite sono generalmente basati sui valori del PIL e sul tasso di disoccupazione. Per le regioni di montagna sono rilevanti anche altri criteri di riferimento. Nello specifico, le zone scarsamente popolate (ossia le regioni NUTS 3 con meno di 12,5 abitanti per km^2) figurano tra le «zone c predefinite». Gli Stati membri possono altresì denominare «zone c non predefinite» le isole e le regioni confinanti caratterizzate da un analogo isolamento geografico (quali penisole o regioni di montagna), che presentano un valore del PIL pro capite inferiore alla media UE-27 o un tasso di disoccupazione superiore al 115 % della media nazionale oppure meno di 5000 abitanti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003803/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: The future of EU policy on mountain regions

Dubbed the EU's ecological backbone, mountain areas are part of Europe's historical heritage that should be preserved and a strategic resource that should be revitalised in the future to develop their unique structural features and ensure their sustainability. At this difficult time of crisis, mountain areas, because of their unique characteristics and their equally numerous unique problems, need the EU to give them careful consideration in order to work out how to meet their needs in a targeted and truly effective manner.

Mountains cover 41.3% of the territory of the EU and are home to 25.4% of its population. The provisions on *de minimis* aid contained in Regulation (EC) No 1998/2006 lay down that only aid under EUR 200 000 is exempt from the requirement to give prior notification to the Commission. As regards state aid for undertakings, Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union lays down that such aid is intended to promote regional development and may, under certain conditions, be considered compatible with the internal market. At present, national regional aid can be granted only to economic activities located in less favoured areas, selected on the basis of objective criteria (GDP and unemployment). The current guidelines on national regional aid for 2007-2013 will expire on 31 December 2013.

1. What resources, and what level of resources, does the Commission plan to make available in the forthcoming programme for 2014-2020 to safeguard mountain regions, their natural and economic heritage and their specific features, boosting their potential with a view to their structural modernisation, enabling them to tackle the crisis threatening their survival?

2. Has it considered the possibility of making mountain areas a specific area for action — the priority area — where the *de minimis* threshold does not apply?

3. Will it review the rules on national regional aid to ensure that they better take account of the special needs of mountain areas, including among the selection criteria for less favoured areas not only GDP and unemployment, but also the permanent natural handicaps and/or the situation of some mountain areas — such as those that are part of the EU 'Natura 2000' network — that means there is international, European and national interest in ensuring the preservation of their exceptional natural heritage?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

1. The Agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ([1]) and the proposed Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) for 2014-2020 do not attribute specific financial resources to mountain areas. However, Article 111 of the proposed CPR allows a modulation of co-financing rates for mountain areas. The amounts attributed to mountain areas in the new period will therefore depend on the design of the future programmes that will be proposed by the Member States and regions.

2. The situation of mountain areas can be addressed by Member States in programmes. This is considered as a suitable way to take into account their particular situation. Commission Regulation 1998/2006 (the *de minimis* Regulation), is currently being reviewed by the Commission but does not foresee any specific provisions for mountain areas. The Commission has launched a public consultation ([2]) which is open until 15 May 2015.

3. The Commission is currently reviewing the Regional Aid Guidelines. The new Guidelines should enter into force in 2014. Based on the Commission proposal that has been published and discussed with Member States in February 2013, the selection criteria for assisted areas refer in general to GDP and unemployment data. However, there are also alternative criteria which can be relevant for mountain areas. In particular, sparsely populated areas (NUTS 3 regions with less than 12.5 inhabitants per km^2) qualify as predefined 'c'-areas. In addition, Member States may designate as non-predefined 'c' areas islands and contiguous areas characterised by similar geographical isolation (e.g. peninsulas or mountain areas) that have a GDP per capita below the EU-27 average or an unemployment rate above 115% of the national average or less than 5 000 inhabitants.

([1]) European Council of 7/8 February 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_de_minimis/index_en.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003804/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rapporti UE-Marocco: espulsione degli eurodeputati in visita per incontrare i rappresentanti delle comunità locali

Lo scorso 17 aprile 2012 l'Europa ha deciso di finanziare in Marocco nove progetti di efficienza energetica nel settore dell'edilizia popolare e del turismo, per un investimento complessivo di circa 7,5 milioni di euro. Lo scorso 4 maggio 2012, nell'ambito del programma Euromed Heritage IV, il Marocco si è visto riconoscere 1,5 milioni di euro per il finanziamento del progetto Montada che ha per obiettivo la valorizzazione dei patrimoni dei suoi centri storici. Lo scorso 30 luglio 2012 la Commissione europea ha dato il via libera al piano d'azione 2012 per il Marocco, il cui valore complessivo di 112 milioni di euro è destinato, per 37 milioni di euro, al sostegno alla politica di gestione e protezione forestale e, per i restanti 75 milioni di euro, alla riforma della gestione delle finanze e dell'amministrazione pubblica. Nel 2012 inoltre, tramite il nuovo strumento della «Spring facility» per lo sviluppo economico, sociale e dei diritti umani, il Marocco ha ricevuto altri 80 milioni di euro.

Lo scorso 6 marzo 2013 quattro eurodeputati, Ivo Vajgl, Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón, Willy Meyer e Isabella Lövin, che si apprestavano a cominciare una visita nel Sahara occidentale per incontrare rappresentanti della popolazione locale, di organizzazioni internazionali e di ONG, sono stati espulsi dalle autorità marocchine e dichiarati persone non gradite. Considerati gli articoli 15, 18, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 38, 42 e 43 del trattato sull'Unione europea, che definiscono le competenze dell'Alto Rappresentante e istituiscono il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE); considerato il ruolo della nuova diplomazia europea così come ridefinita dal trattato di Lisbona; preso atto che gli eurodeputati rappresentano non solo l'Europa, ma tutti i cittadini europei che li hanno democraticamente eletti; alla luce dei fatti riportati, la Commissione:

1. può illustrare quali siano i risultati concretamente raggiunti in termini di avanzamento nella cooperazione e nello sviluppo della democrazia in Marocco attraverso l'investimento di milioni di euro dei cittadini europei?

2. non ritiene che, per evitare che l'Europa assuma il ruolo di mera prestatrice di risorse, nel momento in cui essa decide di prestare assistenza finanziaria ad un Paese terzo o di stringere relazioni bilaterali, debba essere difeso e preteso dai Paesi beneficiari il riconoscimento di fedeltà all'Unione, ai suoi valori fondamentali e ai suoi rappresentanti?

3. non ritiene che debba essere avviato, a livello dell'UE, un processo di riflessione sulla necessità di rendere ancora più stringenti i criteri di condizionalità all'assistenza finanziaria dell'Unione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

L'UE sta effettivamente fornendo assistenza tecnica e finanziaria al Marocco in un'ampia gamma di settori per aiutare il paese a portare avanti le riforme politiche, economiche e sociali in corso. Tra i risultati concretamente raggiunti negli ultimi tempi si annoverano: l'estensione del sistema di assistenza sanitaria di base ai meno abbienti, un maggiore impegno nel settore dell'istruzione, uno sviluppo considerevole del settore agricolo e, ancora, i primi passi verso l'attuazione della nuova Costituzione del 2011, il che significa un consolidamento dei progressi per quanto riguarda il rispetto dei principi democratici e delle libertà fondamentali. Da alcuni anni il Marocco si sta impegnando in un processo di riforme e la recente riforma costituzionale ha riconfermato l'impegno del paese per la democratizzazione. Ciò si rispecchia anche nel documento in allegato sullo «status avanzato» del Marocco del 2008 e nel nuovo piano d'azione ENP per il periodo 2013-2017 di recente concordato tra l'UE e il Marocco. Le condizioni che è necessario soddisfare per usufruire dell'assistenza finanziaria dell'UE, e in particolare i criteri di ammissibilità per le operazioni di sostegno di bilancio, sono stati di recente rafforzati. Nel caso del Marocco, tutti i criteri di ammissibilità sono stati soddisfatti e il sostegno dell'UE al bilancio ha dato risultati soddisfacenti tra cui quelli nei settori sopra menzionati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003804/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: EU-Morocco relations: expulsion of MEPs on a visit to meet local community representatives

On 17 April 2012, the EU decided to fund nine energy efficiency projects in the social housing and tourism sector in Morocco. The total investment was some EUR 7.5 million. On 4 May 2012, as part of the Euromed Heritage IV programme, Morocco was awarded EUR 1.5 million to fund the Montada project, with the aim of promoting the heritage of its historic towns and cities. On 30 July 2012, the Commission gave the green light to the 2012 action plan for Morocco, worth a total of EUR 112 million; of that, EUR 37 million was earmarked to support forestry management and protection, and the remaining EUR 75 million for reforming financial management and public administration. Morocco also received a further EUR 80 million in 2012 under the new 'Spring facility' for economic, social and human rights development.

On 6 March 2013, four MEPs, Ivo Vajgl, Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón, Willy Meyer and Isabella Lövin, who were preparing to begin a visit to the Western Sahara to meet representatives of local communities, international organisations and non-governmental organisations, were expelled by the Moroccan authorities and declared *personae non-gratae*. Articles 15, 18, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 38, 42 and 43 of the Treaty on European Union set out the powers of the High Representative and establish the European External Action Service (EEAS). The role of the new EU diplomatic service was redefined by the Treaty of Lisbon. MEPs represent not only the EU, but all the European citizens who democratically elected them.

1. Can the Commission explain what concrete results have been achieved in terms of progress made in cooperation and the development of democracy in Morocco as a result of the investment of millions of euros of European taxpayers' money?

2. Does it not think that, when the EU decides to provide financial assistance to a third country or to establish closer bilateral relations, in order to avoid becoming merely a provider of funds, it should expect beneficiary countries to remain loyal to the EU, its fundamental values and its representatives?

3. Does it not think that a process should be launched at EU level to examine whether the conditionality criteria for EU financial assistance need to be made even stricter?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The EU is indeed providing technical and financial assistance to Morocco in a wide-array of sectors in support of the country's ongoing political, economic and social reforms. Recent concrete results include: the extension of a basic medical insurance system for the poorest, increased efforts in the fields of education, notable development of the agricultural sector and, last but not least, first steps in the implementation of the new Constitution of 2011, thereby consolidating progress towards the respect of democratic principles and fundamental freedoms. Since several years, Morocco is being engaged in a process of reforms and the recent constitutional reform reconfirmed the country's commitment to democratisation. This also is reflected in the joint document on the 'advanced status' of 2008 and the recently agreed new ENP EU-Morocco Action Plan for the period 2013-2017. Conditionality for EU financial assistance has been strengthened in recent years, in particular eligibility criteria for budget support operations. In the case of Morocco, all these eligibility criteria have been met and the EU budget support has delivered satisfactory outcomes including in the sectors mentioned.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003805/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rapporti UE-Marocco: espulsione degli eurodeputati in visita per incontrare i rappresentanti delle comunità locali

Lo scorso 17 aprile 2012, l'Europa ha deciso di finanziare in Marocco nove progetti di efficienza energetica nel settore dell'edilizia popolare e del turismo per un investimento complessivo di circa 7,5 milioni di euro. Lo scorso 4 maggio 2012, nell'ambito del programma Euromed Heritage IV, il Marocco si è visto riconoscere 1,5 milioni di euro per il finanziamento del progetto Montada che ha per obiettivo la valorizzazione dei patrimoni dei suoi centri storici. Lo scorso 30 luglio 2012, la Commissione ha dato il via libera al piano d'azione 2012 per il Marocco, il cui valore complessivo di 112 milioni di euro è destinato, per 37 milioni di euro, al sostegno alla politica di gestione e protezione forestale e, per i restanti 75 milioni di euro, alla riforma della gestione delle finanze e dell'amministrazione pubblica. Nel 2012, inoltre, tramite il nuovo programma SPRING per lo sviluppo economico, sociale e dei diritti umani, il Marocco ha ricevuto altri 80 milioni di euro.

Lo scorso 6 marzo 2013, quattro eurodeputati (Ivo Vajgl, Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón, Willy Meyer e Isabella Lövin) che si apprestavano a cominciare una visita nel Sahara occidentale per incontrare rappresentanti della popolazione locale, di organizzazioni internazionali e di ONG, sono stati espulsi dalle autorità marocchine e dichiarati persone non gradite. Considerati gli articoli 15, 18, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 38, 42 e 43 del trattato sull'Unione europea che definiscono le competenze dell'Alto Rappresentante e istituiscono il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE); considerato il ruolo della nuova diplomazia europea come ridefinita dal trattato di Lisbona; preso atto che gli eurodeputati rappresentano non solo l'Europa ma tutti i cittadini europei che li hanno democraticamente eletti; si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante quanto segue:

1. può chiarire gli estremi dei fatti?

2. ha intenzione di esprimere una posizione ufficiale e condannare pubblicamente la vicenda?

3. come ha intenzione di agire a fronte di questo episodio di totale rifiuto e chiusura delle autorità marocchine nei confronti dell'Europa e dei suoi rappresentanti?

4. come intende muoversi per ristabilire un clima di rispetto e dialogo tra le autorità marocchine, le istituzioni europee e i suoi rappresentanti?

5. qual è lo stato attuale del dialogo tra il Servizio per l'azione esterna dell'Unione europea e il Marocco?

6. se presente una delegazione del SEAE con sede in Marocco, può precisare quanto personale la compone e il costo totale annuale sostenuto dai cittadini per i rispettivi emolumenti?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante è a conoscenza delle circostanze in cui un gruppo di deputati del Parlamento europeo sono stati espulsi dalle autorità marocchine mentre erano in viaggio verso il territorio del Sahara occidentale. Quando l'Alta Rappresentante ha preso atto della lettera di martedì 5 marzo, scritta dall'ambasciatore marocchino all'onorevole deputato Neuser, la delegazione dell'UE a Rabat è stata immediatamente avvertita. Il capo della delegazione dell'UE ha contattato il segretario generale del ministero degli Affari esteri, il quale lo ha informato che gli onorevoli deputati non sarebbero stati autorizzati a recarsi a Laayoune. Il capo della delegazione ha contattato l'onorevole Vajgl (in quel momento a Parigi) per comunicargli la situazione e informarlo che, sfortunatamente, non sussisteva alcuna possibilità di dialogo con le autorità marocchine. L'onorevole Vajgl ha confermato che la delegazione di deputati del Parlamento europeo si sarebbe in ogni caso recata a Casablanca.

L'UE affronterà la questione con le autorità marocchine. L'UE è a conoscenza delle difficoltà connesse alla questione del Sahara occidentale e ritiene che sia necessario un approccio più costruttivo per promuovere il dialogo anche su tematiche sensibili e ottenere che osservatori internazionali siano autorizzati a effettuare visite in buona fede nel Sahara occidentale.

Le relazioni fra l'UE e il Marocco sono molto intense. L'Unione europea sostiene le riforme politiche, economiche e sociali in Marocco fornendo assistenza finanziaria e tecnica; è inoltre in corso di attuazione un nuovo piano di azione della politica europea di vicinato per il periodo 2013-2017; recentemente sono stati conclusi i negoziati per un partenariato in materia di mobilità e nel mese di aprile 2013 sono iniziati quelli per un'area globale e approfondita di libero scambio. Gli organi istituiti dall'accordo di associazione intrattengono un dialogo politico costante.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003805/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Morocco relations: expulsion of MEPs on a visit to meet local community representatives

On 17 April 2012, the EU decided to fund nine energy efficiency projects in the social housing and tourism sector in Morocco. The total investment was some EUR 7.5 million. On 4 May 2012, as part of the Euromed Heritage IV programme, Morocco was awarded EUR 1.5 million to fund the Montada project, with the aim of promoting the heritage of its historic towns and cities. On 30 July 2012, the Commission gave the green light to the 2012 action plan for Morocco, worth a total of EUR 112 million; of that, EUR 37 million was earmarked to support forestry management and protection, and the remaining EUR 75 million for reforming financial management and public administration. Morocco also received a further EUR 80 million in 2012 under the new Spring programme for economic, social and human rights development.

On 6 March 2013, four MEPs, Ivo Vajgl, Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón, Willy Meyer and Isabella Lövin, who were preparing to begin a visit to the Western Sahara to meet representatives of local communities, international organisations and non-governmental organisations, were expelled by the Moroccan authorities and declared *personae non-gratae*. Articles 15, 18, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 38, 42 and 43 of the Treaty on European Union set out the powers of the High Representative and establish the European External Action Service (EEAS). The role of the new EU diplomatic service was redefined by the Treaty of Lisbon. MEPs represent not only the EU, but all the European citizens who democratically elected them.

1. Can the High Representative shed light on exactly what happened?

2. Does she intend to express an official position and publicly condemn what happened?

3. Does she plan to take action in response to this episode, in which the Moroccan authorities totally rejected and shut out the EU and its representatives?

4. How will she restore a climate of respect and dialogue between the Moroccan authorities, the EU institutions and its representatives?

5. What is the current status of the dialogue between the European External Action Service and Morocco?

6. If there is an EEAS delegation based in Morocco, can she clarify how many officials it consists of and the total annual cost borne by EU citizens to pay their salaries?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The HR/VP is aware of the circumstances under which a group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) was turned back by Moroccan authorities en route to the territory of Western Sahara. When the HR/VP became aware of the letter dated Tuesday, 5 March, written by the Moroccan Ambassador to MEP Neuser, the EU Delegation in Rabat was immediately alerted. The EU Head of Delegation (HoD) contacted the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who told him that the MEPs would not be allowed to travel to Laayoune. The HoD called Mr Vajgl (in transit in Paris) to let him know this position and that there was, unfortunately, no room for discussion with the Moroccan authorities. Mr Vajgl indicated that the MEP delegation would still fly to Casablanca.

The EU will raise the issue with the Moroccan authorities. The EU is aware of the difficulties of the Western Sahara issue. The EU believes that a more constructive approach is needed according to which dialogue is possible also on sensitive issues and where visits to Western Sahara undertaken in good faith by international observers are allowed.

EU-Morocco relations are very intense. The EU supports political, economic and social reforms in Morocco with financial and technical assistance; there is also a new European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan covering the period 2013-2017; negotiations on a mobility partnership have been concluded recently and negotiations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area started in April 2013. There is regular political dialogue in the context of the bodies created by the Association Agreement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003806/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Attuazione della direttiva contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali

Lo scorso 4 febbraio il Vicepresidente della Commissione Tajani ha dichiarato che il decreto legislativo n. 192 del 9 novembre 2012 per il recepimento della direttiva 2011/7/UE relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali contiene troppe ambiguità incompatibili con la norma comunitaria.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Come valuta il decreto legislativo con il quale il governo italiano ha recepito nel 2012 la direttiva 2011/7/UE?

2. Quali sono i passaggi nei quali ritiene vi siano deroghe che creano incompatibilità con la direttiva?

3. Come intende agire nei confronti dell'Italia?

4. Intende vigilare sulla corretta applicazione della direttiva nel nostro paese?

5. Come reputa che la direttiva sia stata recepita negli altri Stati membri?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2013)

1.-2. Il governo italiano ha recepito la direttiva 2011/7/UE il 9 novembre 2012 con il decreto legislativo n. 192/2012. Per quanto concerne certi aspetti del recepimento (tra gli altri, quelli relativi all'obbligo per le autorità pubbliche di pagare entro 30 giorni di calendario), la Commissione ha contattato il ministro italiano dello Sviluppo economico, delle infrastrutture e dei trasporti inviandogli due lettere, nel dicembre 2012 e nel marzo 2013, con cui gli chiedeva chiarimenti. La Commissione sta analizzando ora i chiarimenti inviati dal governo italiano per stabilire se le disposizioni nazionali siano conformi alla direttiva.

3.-4. Se dalla valutazione giuridica risultasse una mancanza di conformità al disposto della direttiva, la Commissione, nel suo ruolo di custode dei trattati, non esiterà a compiere i passi necessari, senza escludere eventualmente l'avvio di procedure di infrazione.

5. A tutto il 22 aprile 2013 erano diciotto gli Stati membri ad aver notificato alla Commissione le loro misure di recepimento complete. La Commissione è impegnata ora in un'analisi legale dei testi per verificare se le misure nazionali siano conformi ai dettami della direttiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003806/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: Transposition of the directive on combating late payment in commercial transactions

On 4 February 2013, Commission Vice-President Tajani stated that Legislative Decree No 192 of 9 November 2012 transposing Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions contained too many ambiguities to be compatible with EC law.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the Legislative Decree with which the Italian Government transposed Directive 2011/7/EU in 2012?

2. Which passages does it think contain derogations that are incompatible with the directive?

3. What action will it take against Italy?

4. Will it ensure that the directive is properly transposed in Italy?

5. What does it think of how the directive has been transposed in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

1-2. The Italian Government transposed Directive 2011/7/EU on 9 November 2012 by Legislative Decree No 192/2012. With regard to certain aspects of the transposition (amongst others concerning the obligation for public authorities to pay within 30 calendar days), the Commission contacted the Italian Minister of Economic Development, Infrastructure and Transport, by means of two letters in December 2012 and March 2013, asking for clarifications. The Commission is currently analysing the clarifications received from the Italian Government in order to establish whether the national measure is in conformity with the directive.

3-4. Should the legal assessment reveal non-compliance with the requirements of the directive, the Commission will, in its role as Guardian of the Treaty, not hesitate to take the necessary action, including where appropriate infringement procedures.

5. As of 22 April 2013, 18 Member States have notified their complete transposition measures to the Commission. The Commission is currently undertaking a legal analysis of the texts to verify whether the national measures are in conformity with the directive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003807/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(5 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Interporto di Termini Imerese

La procedura di cofinanziamento del grande progetto per l'Interporto di Termini Imerese è tuttora in fase di valutazione da parte delle Direzioni Generali della Commissione europea. Dalle informazioni acquisite risulta che le autorità nazionali e regionali abbiano presentato compiutamente tutta la documentazione richiesta, che si inserisce nella programmazione 2007-2013 con le previsioni di esecuzione dell'opera entro il prossimo 2015. In considerazione di quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione chiarire quali aspetti impediscano la rapida approvazione e quali siano le cause che rallentano la conclusione di un procedimento peraltro risalente nel tempo? Può, altresì, confermare la validità dell'infrastruttura riguardo al potenziamento dei trasporti intermodali rispetto all'intera isola?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

La Commissione deve valutare la candidatura del grande progetto relativo al centro logistico di Termini Imerese alla luce delle disposizioni che si applicano al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale nonché di tutti i regolamenti UE applicabili, compresi quelli in materia di concorrenza e di aiuti di Stato. I documenti forniti dall'autorità di gestione sono ancora in corso di analisi nell'ottica degli aiuti di Stato. Una decisione su questo grande progetto verrà adottata soltanto una volta perfezionata la valutazione finale tenendo conto di tutte le pertinenti disposizioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003807/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(5 April 2013)

Subject: Termini Imerese logistics centre

The procedure relating to the co-financing of the major project for the Termini Imerese logistics centre (*Interporto*) is still being assessed by the Directorates General of the Commission. From the information obtained, it would appear that the national and regional authorities have submitted all the required documentation in full, which is to be included in the 2007-2013 programming period, and that the work is expected to be carried out by 2015.

In view of the above, can the Commission clarify what exactly is preventing its prompt approval and what is slowing down the conclusion of a process that began some time ago? Can it also confirm the validity of the infrastructure in question in terms of the strengthening of intermodal transport throughout the island?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission has to assess the application for the major project for the Termini Imerese logistics centre in the light of the provisions of the European Regional Development Fund as well as all applicable EU policy regulations, including competition and state aid. The documents provided by the managing authorithy are still analysed for their state aid aspects. A decision on the major project will only be taken upon completion of the final assessment, taking into account all relevant policy provisions.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-003809/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(8. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Thaimaan vientiteollisuudessa tapahtuvat ihmisoikeusloukkaukset, erityisesti Natural Fruit -yhtiön tapaus

Thaimaalainen Natural Fruit -yhtiö on nostanut Thaimaassa kaksi kannetta suomalaisen Finnwatchin asiantuntijaa Andy Hallia vastaan. Kanteiden syy on Hallin tutkimus ja siinä julkaistut löydöt yhtiöstä: mm. laittoman alhaiset palkat, paperittomat, jopa alaikäiset työntekijät sekä työntekijöiden sitominen tehtaaseen esimerkiksi passien ja työlupien takavarikoimisen avulla.

Finnwatch ilmoitti Thaimaan viranomaisille näistä huolestuttavista löydöistä joulukuussa 2012. Yhtiötä ja tämän emoyhtiötä ei kuitenkaan vaadittu tilille toimistaan. Sen sijaan Hallia uhkaavat tällä hetkellä yli seitsemän miljoonan euron korvaukset tai jopa seitsemän vuoden vankeusrangaistus tietojen esille tuomisesta. Tämä siitäkin huolimatta, että Hallin oikeuteen vienyt yhtiö ei edes vastannut lukuisiin yhteistyöpyyntöihin tutkimuksen aikana.

Natural Fruit -yhtiön tapaus on herättänyt jälleen yhden vakavan epäilyn Thaimaan vientiteollisuudessa tapahtuvista perusoikeuksien loukkauksista. Hallinto ei ole puuttunut saatujen tietojen mukaan ihmisoikeusrikkomuksiin riittävän tehokkaasti.

Aikooko komissio ryhtyä toimiin, jotta Thaimaan viranomaiset aloittavat välittömästi perusteellisen tutkinnan Natural Fruit -tehtaan sekä sen emoyhtiön toimista ja jotta EU:n kansalaiselle Andy Hallille turvataan kansainvälisten ihmisoikeussopimusten mukainen kohtelu?

Mihin välittömiin toimenpiteisiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä juuri alkaneissa vapaakauppaneuvotteluissa Thaimaan kanssa, jotta laajemmin Thaimaan vientiteollisuudessa esiintyviin ihmisoikeusloukkauksiin puututaan jatkossa tehokkaasti ja jotta ihmisoikeuksien puolustajien toiminta ja sananvapaus turvataan?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(15. toukokuuta 2013)

EU on tietoinen siitä, että Thaimaan tuomioistuimissa on käsittelyssä Andy Hallia vastaan nostetut kanteet, jotka liittyvät hänen Finnwatchille tekemään työhönsä. EU on seurannut asiaa tiiviisti alusta lähtien ja tekee niin vastakin yhdessä jäsenvaltioiden kanssa. EU:n edustusto osallistui ensimmäiseen oikeudenistuntoon huhtikuussa 2013 ja osallistuu niihin myös jatkossa.

Yleisemmin voidaan todeta, että EU työskentelee vankkumattomasti sananvapauden puolesta Thaimaassa ja järjesti asiasta laajan seminaarin Bangkokissa tammikuun lopussa 2013.

EU pitää hyvin tärkeänä sitä, että Thaimaan kanssa hiljattain käynnistettyihin neuvotteluihin vapaakauppasopimuksesta sisällytetään kauppaa ja kestävää kehitystä koskevia määräyksiä. Työelämän perusnormien tehokkaan täytäntöönpanon edistäminen muodostaa osan tästä tavoitteesta. Vapaakauppasopimuksen kauppaa ja kestävää kehitystä koskevat määräykset voisivat lisäksi tarjota puitteet aihetta koskevalle keskustelulle, jota käytäisiin myös alan sidosryhmien kanssa.

Finnwatchin tutkimukseen liittyen ulkoasiainedustaja haluaa kiinnittää arvoisan parlamentinjäsenen huomion vastaukseen, jonka kauppapolitiikasta vastaava komissaari on antanut jo aiemmin komission puolesta kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-000618/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003809/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Human rights violations connected with Thailand's export industry, with special reference to the Natural Fruit company

The Thai company Natural Fruit has brought two cases before the Thai courts against Andy Hall, an expert working for the Finnish organisation Finnwatch. The reason for the actions is Hall's investigation and the findings from it which have been published concerning the company: *inter alia* its paying of illegally low wages, its use of workers who have no papers or are even under age and the practice of tying workers to a factory, for example by confiscating their passports and work permits.

Finnwatch informed the Thai authorities of these worrying findings in December 2012. However, neither the company nor its parent company have been called to account for their actions. Instead, Hall is now threatened with having to pay more than EUR 7 million in compensation or even with seven years' imprisonment for revealing the information. This is despite the fact that the company which has taken Hall to court did not even reply to numerous requests for cooperation during the investigation.

The case of Natural Fruit has again given rise to a serious suspicion that basic human rights are being violated in Thailand's export industry. According to information received, the authorities have not acted effectively enough in response to the human rights violations.

Will the Commission take action to persuade the Thai authorities to immediately initiate a thorough investigation into Natural Fruit's factory and the conduct of its parent company and to ensure that the EU citizen Andy Hall is treated in accordance with international human rights conventions?

What immediate measures will the Commission take in the free trade negotiations which have just begun with Thailand in order, in future, to bring about effective action against the breaches of human rights which occur more generally in Thailand's export industry and to safeguard the work and freedom of speech of human rights defenders?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The EU is aware of the cases before Thai courts against Mr Andy Hall related to his work for Finnwatch. The EU has followed this matter closely from the beginning and will continue to do so together with Member States. The EU Delegation attended the first trial hearing in April 2013 and will continue to do so.

On a more general note, the EU works consistently for freedom of expression in Thailand, and organised a major seminar in Bangkok about this matter in late January 2013.

The EU attaches great importance to including provisions on Trade and Sustainable Development in the recently launched Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with Thailand. Promoting the effective implementation of core labour standards form part of this objective. The trade and sustainable development provisions in the FTA could also provide a framework for dialogue in this area, including with relevant stakeholders.

Regarding the Finnwatch study, the HR/VP would also like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the reply already given to previous Written Question E-000618/2013 by the Commissioner responsible for Trade on behalf of the Commission.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003810/13
al Consejo
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Desarrollo de un Programa para Facilitar el Comercio (Trade Facilitation Programme — TFP)

Las rebajas en la calificación crediticia de los Estados miembros han afectado a sus instituciones financieras y también a familias y empresas, con independencia de su solvencia. Esta situación, que pretende corregirse con la Unión Bancaria, tiene un gran impacto en el acceso a garantías y avales a las empresas con vocación exportadora de los países cuya calificación crediticia ha sido rebajada.

La demanda de garantías y avales no ha sido cubierta por nuevos entrantes dada la falta de relación con los potenciales clientes y de familiaridad con sus mercados habituales. Estas empresas europeas ven bloqueada así su participación en concursos internacionales y su presencia en el exterior. Se impide de esta forma la corrección de los desequilibrios macroeconómicos, la consecución de los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020 y, en el caso de operaciones en el ámbito europeo, provoca una seria anomalía en el funcionamiento del mercado interior.

En un informe de 2008 elaborado para el Banco Europeo de Inversiones sobre distintos mecanismos de financiación, se contemplan Programas de Facilitación de Comercio (Trade Facilitation Programmes — TFP) para ofrecer este tipo de garantías y avales. El Banco Europeo de Reconstrucción y Desarrollo (BERD) los viene desarrollando en su limitado ámbito desde 1997, siendo el 70 % de sus operaciones en apoyo de Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas.

La cumbre de líderes de la eurozona de 29 junio de 2012 concluyó que «que es imperativo romper el círculo vicioso entre bancos y emisores soberanos». El establecimiento de un Programa para Facilitar el Comercio (Trade Facilitation Programme) es necesario para conseguirlo, y hacer efectivas las prioridades del Semestre Europeo.

¿Va a adoptarse alguna iniciativa para poner en marcha un Programa para Facilitar el Comercio (Trade Facilitation Programme), por parte del Banco Europeo de Inversiones o por otra vía, de conformidad con las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo, las recomendaciones del Consejo y las posiciones defendidas por la Comisión? Teniendo en cuenta lo beneficioso de esta medida para la economía real, ¿va a adoptarse con urgencia?

Respuesta
(1 de julio de 2013)

Como sabe Su Señoría, el Consejo se pronuncia sobre la base de una propuesta de la Comisión. Hasta el momento, la Comisión no ha presentado ninguna propuesta específica sobre el asunto a que se refiere Su Señoría.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003810/13
to the Council
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Development of a trade facilitation programme (TFP)

Downgrades in Member States' credit ratings have affected financial institutions as well as families and companies, regardless of the level of solvency involved. This situation, for which the banking union has been suggested as a solution, is having a major impact as regards access to guarantees and commitments for export companies in countries whose credit ratings have been revised downwards.

Demand for guarantees and commitments has not been met by new entrants owing to a lack of links with potential clients and insufficient familiarity with the usual markets. European companies are thus being prevented from taking part in international procurement procedures and their external presence is being eroded. It is therefore proving difficult to correct macroeconomic imbalances and attain the Europe 2020 strategy objectives. In addition, where transactions within Europe are concerned, this situation is causing a serious anomaly in the operation of the internal market.

A 2008 report by the European Investment Bank (EIB) on various funding mechanisms proposed trade facilitation programmes (TFPs) as a way of offering guarantees and commitments of this kind. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has been developing these within its limited remit since 1997: they account for 70% of its SME support operations.

The Eurozone leaders' summit of 29 June 2012 concluded that 'it is imperative to break the vicious circle between banks and sovereigns'. A trade facilitation programme needs to be set up in order to do this, and to put the European Semester priorities into effect.

Are there any plans to take action with a view to implementing a trade facilitation programme, via the EIB or by other means, in line with the European Council conclusions, the Council recommendations and positions taken by the Commission? Given the benefits this measure can bring to the real economy, will such action be taken as a matter of urgency?

Reply
(1 July 2013)

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Council acts on the basis of a proposal from the Commission. At the present time, no specific Commission proposal has been tabled concerning the matter referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003811/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violencia contra las mujeres en Colombia e impunidad de estos hechos

Según datos del Instituto de Medicina Legal y de Ciencias Forenses de Colombia, en el 2011 se registraron en ese país 70 134 casos de violencia intrafamiliar contra mujeres; 18 982 casos de violencia sexual lo que entraña un incremento del 11 % con respecto al 2010, así como 130 casos de feminicidio. Si bien ha habido avances a nivel normativo, la falta de implementación de estas normas y la impunidad generalizada conducen a la agudización de las violencias. La violencia sexual sigue siendo utilizada como arma de guerra por distintos grupos armados, y las mujeres son las principales víctimas de desplazamiento forzado. Según cifras de la Fiscalía, la impunidad para estos hechos es prácticamente total.

¿Qué acciones están siendo tomadas por la UE y el SAE, basadas en las directrices de la UE sobre violencia contra la mujer, frente a los crímenes contra las mujeres en Colombia y a su grave impunidad?

¿Cuáles son las acciones concretas tomadas por el SAE y la delegación de la UE para garantizar la implementación eficiente y transparente de parte del Estado colombiano del marco normativo en la materia, y en particular de la Ley 1257?

¿Tiene la UE previsto intervenir durante el Examen Periódico Universal de Colombia que tendrá lugar el 23 de abril de 2013 en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas para expresar su preocupación frente a esta dramática situación y a la impunidad de estos crímenes?

¿Qué acciones piensan tomar el SAE y la Alta Representante para garantizar la participación política y económica de las mujeres y luchar contra la violencia en su contra, de acuerdo con el Plan de Acción UE-CELAC 2013-2015?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de junio de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta comparte la preocupación por la gran extensión de la violencia contra las mujeres en Colombia, tanto en la sociedad en general como en el contexto del conflicto interno actual.

El tema «La mujer y los conflictos armados» se ha incluido en la estrategia nacional en materia de derechos humanos de la UE, que se encuentra actualmente en fase de adopción. En este ámbito, la UE se propone aumentar el grado de concienciación e impulsar la aplicación de las Directrices de la UE sobre la violencia contra las mujeres, así como las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas 1325 y 1820 sobre la mujer, la paz y la seguridad.

En el marco del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas, las intervenciones de los Estados miembros de la UE en el reciente Examen Periódico Universal de Colombia se basaron en las labores del grupo de trabajo de la UE sobre derechos humanos en Bogotá. Como consecuencia de ello, Bélgica, Austria, Hungría, España, Francia, Portugal, Finlandia, Irlanda y Suecia formularon recomendaciones relacionadas con la violencia contra las mujeres. Como respuesta, el Gobierno colombiano, entre otras cosas, acordó desarrollar y aplicar un plan de acción global e interdisciplinario encaminado a combatir la violencia contra las mujeres, y a seguir y aplicar efectivamente las recomendaciones de la Representante Especial de las Naciones Unidas para la lucha contra la violencia sexual en los conflictos armados.

Estos objetivos, así como la participación política y económica de las mujeres, también son respaldados por la cooperación al desarrollo de la UE en Colombia. En particular, la UE proporciona financiación a organizaciones de la social civil activas en los ámbitos de la mujer, la paz y la seguridad, así como apoyo material, psicosocial y jurídico a mujeres dirigentes y a sus familias y a organizaciones de mujeres que sufren amenazas o ataques. También promueve estrategias de lucha contra la pobreza que tienen fuerte incidencia en las mujeres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003811/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violence against women in Colombia and impunity in such cases

According to data from the Colombian Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, there were 70 134 recorded cases of domestic violence against women in the country in 2011, 18 982 cases of sexual violence (an increase of 11% over 2010), and 130 cases of femicide. While legislative progress has been made, failure to implement this legislation and widespread impunity are leading to a worsening of this violence. Sexual violence continues to be used as a weapon of war by different armed groups, and women are the main victims of forced displacement. According to figures from the Office of the Attorney General, there is practically complete impunity for these acts.

What action is being taken by the EU and the EEAS, based on the EU guidelines on violence against women, to combat crimes against women in Colombia and ensure that they do not go unpunished?

What concrete action is being taken by the EEAS and the EU delegation to ensure that the Colombian State implements the applicable regulatory framework efficiently and transparently, particularly Law No 1257?

Does the EU plan to speak during the Universal Periodic Review of Colombia, due to be held on 23 April 2013 in the UN Human Rights Council, to voice its concern regarding this grave situation and the lack of punishment for these crimes?

What action do the EEAS and the High Representative plan to take to ensure women's political and economic participation and to combat violence against them, in accordance with the EU-CELAC Action Plan 2013-2015?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

The HR/VP shares the concern about the widespread violence against women in Colombia, both in society in general and in the context of the ongoing internal conflict.

The theme 'women and armed conflict' has been included in the EU's country strategy for human rights that is currently being adopted. Under this heading, the EU intends to raise awareness and further the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls, as well as UN Security Resolution 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security.

In the UN Human Rights Council, interventions of EU Member States at the recent Universal Periodic Review of Colombia were informed by the work of the EU Working Group on Human Rights in Bogotá. As a result, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Spain, France, Portugal, Finland, Ireland and Sweden all made recommendations on the topic of violence against women. In response, the Colombian government i.a. agreed to develop and implement a comprehensive and interdisciplinary action plan aimed at combating violence against women, as well as to follow-up and implement effectively the recommendations of the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

These aims, as well as women's political and economic participation are supported also by the EU's development cooperation in Colombia. The EU i.a. provides funding to civil society organisations active on women, peace and security, as well as material, psychosocial and legal support for women leaders and their families, and for women organisations that are threatened or attacked. It also promotes strategies to fight against poverty with a strong incidence in women.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003812/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Ferkelkastration ohne Betäubung in Mitgliedstaaten der EU

Die Richtlinie 2008/120/EG des Rates erlaubt Eingriffe nur zu therapeutischen Zwecken, zur Identifikation oder Diagnose. Einzige Ausnahme ist die betäubungslose Kastration von männlichen Ferkeln unter sieben Tagen und die Kastration mit Betäubung bei Ferkeln, die älter als sieben Tage sind. Obwohl diese Bestimmung mit der Bedingung verbunden ist, dass andere Methoden bei der Kastration angewandt werden müssen als das Herausreißen von Gewebe, wird häufig von Tierschutzverbänden beklagt, dass auch diese Methode noch weit verbreitet ist.

Obwohl es auf europäischer wie auf nationaler Ebene zahlreiche freiwillige Erklärungen zur Förderung alternativer Methoden der Vermeidung des Ebergeruchs gibt, werden noch immer in fast allen Mitgliedstaaten Ferkel unbetäubt kastriert. Diese Praxis besteht fort, obwohl einige Staaten — wie Großbritannien und Irland — erfolgreich andere Methoden anwenden und es dort nicht mehr zu Ferkelkastrationen kommt.

Hat die Kommission Zahlen darüber, wie zuverlässig die Branche ihr Versprechen, ab 1. Januar 2012 nur noch mit Betäubung zu kastrieren, umgesetzt hat?

Ist nach heutigem Stand die vollständige Umsetzung der Vereinbarung, ab 2018 keine Kastrationen mehr durchzuführen, realistisch?

Erwägt die Kommission, die Richtlinie 2008/120/EG zu überarbeiten, sollte die Branche den freiwilligen Vereinbarungen nicht nachkommen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

Gemäß der EU-Rechtsvorschrift zum Schutz von Schweinen, Richtlinie 2008/120/EG ([1]) dürfen männliche Ferkel unter sieben Tagen von einer qualifizierter Person operativ kastriert werden.

Der Kommission liegt derzeit keine vollständige Liste der Mitgliedstaaten vor, in denen die chirurgische Kastration mit Anästhetika und/oder Analgetika durchgeführt wird.

In der Europäischen Erklärung über Alternativen zur chirurgischen Kastration bei Schweinen ([2]) ist eine Reihe von EU-Maßnahmen festgelegt, die für die Entwicklung der Mechanismen zur EU-weiten Abschaffung der chirurgischen Kastration bis zum 1. Januar 2018 erforderlich sind. Dabei handelt es sich um eine freiwillige Verpflichtung der Hauptakteure der Schweinebranche, die rechtlich nicht bindend ist. Aus der Erklärung geht klar hervor, dass die Durchführbarkeit aller Alternativen zur chirurgischen Kastration weiter untersucht wird. Die Kommission hat daher im Jahr 2012 verschiedene Studien eingeleitet, um die stufenweise Abschaffung der Kastration zu unterstützen.

Die Kommission erwägt derzeit keine Änderung der Richtlinie 2008/120/EG.

([1]) Richtlinie 2008/120/EG des Rates über Mindestanforderungen für den Schutz von Schweinen; ABl. L 47 vom 18.12.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/docs/castration_pigs_declaration_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003812/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Castration of piglets without anaesthesia in EU Member States

Council Directive 2008/120/EC permits procedures intended as an intervention for therapeutic, identification or diagnostic purposes. The only exception is the castration of male piglets less than seven days old without anaesthetic and the castration of piglets more than seven days old with anaesthetic. Although this provision is conditional upon the castration being carried out by means other than the tearing of tissues, animal protection bodies frequently complain that use of this method is also still widespread.

Although there are numerous voluntary declarations at both European and national level promoting alternative methods for avoiding boar taint, piglets are still castrated without anaesthetic in almost all Member States. This practice continues, although some Member States, such as the United Kingdom and Ireland, use other methods successfully, and piglets are no longer castrated there.

Does the Commission have any figures showing how reliably the industry has fulfilled its promise only to carry out castration with anaesthesia from 1 January 2012 onwards?

As things currently stand, is the full implementation of the agreement not to carry out any more castrations from 2018 onwards realistic?

Is the Commission considering revising Directive 2008/120/EC if the industry does not fulfil the voluntary agreements?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The EU legislation on the protection of pigs, Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]), allows the surgical castration of male piglets before seven days of age by a trained person.

Currently, the Commission does not have a complete overview of the Member States where surgical castration is done with anaesthesia and/or analgesia.

The European Declaration on alternatives to surgical castration of pigs ([2]) sets out a series of EU activities necessary to develop the mechanisms which will bring to an end the surgical castration at European level by 1 January 2018. It is a voluntary commitment of the main actors of the pig sector and it is not legally binding. In the Declaration, it is clear that the feasibility of all alternatives to replace surgical castration will be further studied. For this reason the Commission launched several studies in 2012 to support the phasing out of castration.

The Commission currently is not considering any amendment of Directive 2008/120/EC.

([1]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs; OJ L47,18.12.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/docs/castration_pigs_declaration_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003813/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Household gas costs

The cost of household gas is of great concern to my constituents in Scotland, and there is a perception across the UK that gas companies are quick to put up their prices when the wholesale price goes up, but are slow to bring them down when the wholesale price falls.

1. What actions is the Commission taking to ensure fair competition and pricing in the gas market across the EU and in Scotland?

2. Will the Commission undertake an investigation to see if gas companies are unfairly treating consumers with their pricing adjustments in Scotland?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

Relevant EU energy legislation (hereinafter the directive) ([1]), adopted in 2009 on the basis of a Commission proposal, provides for broad market opening and competition between suppliers in the gas market to be available for all EU citizens, including in Scotland. This should ensure access to gas in the most advantageous market conditions and contribute to keep end-users gas prices on check. Moreover, the directive contains multiple provisions aiming to provide common and high level of protection of energy consumers in the EU.

The responsibility for the transposition and implementation of the directive lies with the Member States, on whom the legislation imposes inter alia the obligation to set up national regulatory authorities. The objectives of these regulatory authorities include 'ensuring that consumers benefit through the efficient functioning of their national market, promoting effective competition and helping to ensure consumer protection' ([2]). In the UK, this competent national authority is Ofgem. Furthermore, Ofgem has powers to apply national and EU competition law in the energy sector and intervene, as necessary, against unlawful practices.

([1]) Directive 2009/73/EC of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in gas.
([2]) Article 40(g).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003814/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Data Protection Regulation

A number of senior medical clinical researchers and psychiatrists have raised concerns about the current wording of the proposed Data Protection Regulation (DPR); they believe that if it were implemented in its current format, data sharing for medical research would cease almost completely. They also claim that the DPR will have a tangible negative impact on recruitments for clinical trials, as many such trials can only be carried out if the individuals with the condition in question can be contacted.

In this regard, has the Commission carried out an assessment as to the potential impact of the DPR on medical research, and, if so, could it provide details of the results it has obtained?

Furthermore, could the Commission give details as to how it will strike the right balance between protecting individuals' rights to data privacy and preserving the need and freedom of medical researchers to engage with individuals?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

In accordance with the European Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines ([1]), the legislative proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([2]) was accompanied by a thorough impact assessment ([3]) which assessed three broad categories of impacts, namely economic, social and environmental impacts. Part of this impact assessment was an analysis of the existing situation in the Member States as regards medical research and the processing of health data.

Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 of the impact assessment mention the fragmentation of the Member States' rules on sensitive data as an indicative example of the divergent application of the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([4]), and of the problems that arise for the internal market, as well as for public health objectives in general. Annex 2 of the impact assessment includes a detailed analysis of the current situation in the Member States.

The proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([5]) includes in Article 83 harmonised and specific conditions for processing personal data for scientific purposes, as well as a derogation from the prohibition on processing sensitive categories of data, particularly for health purposes, including for public health and scientific research purposes (Article 9(i)). The proposal therefore seeks to facilitate medical research and not to prevent it. Recital 125 of the regulation also refers to the fact that such processing should respect other relevant legislation such as on clinical trials, and Recital 126 clarifies that the term 'research' is to be widely construed.

([1]) SEC(2009)92 — European Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines of 15 January 2009, available at http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf

([2]) COM(2012)11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

([3]) SEC(2012) 72 final — available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

([4]) Directive 95/46/EC protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons with respect to the protection of their personal data. OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.

([5]) COM(2012)11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003815/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(8 avril 2013)

Objet: Mettre fin aux incertitudes sur le marché de l'énergie pour protéger les Européens contre la hausse des prix

Les prix de l'énergie ne cessent d'augmenter. La semaine dernière encore, l'Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE) a annoncé que les prix de l'énergie en France poursuivaient leur hausse, au détriment de notre industrie. Cette situation menace notre reprise, nos emplois, et elle met en danger des millions de familles européennes, qui ont de plus en plus de difficultés à payer leurs factures d'énergie, sans parler de la hausse des prix des biens de consommation.

Devant les députés européens, fin mars, vous l'avez dit vous-même: le coût de l'énergie aujourd'hui serait plus important que le coût du travail. Pourtant, dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du 3e paquet Énergie, plusieurs bouleversements internationaux ainsi que l'évolution de nos relations avec notre partenaire russe soulèvent d'importantes craintes pour l'ensemble des investisseurs. Le marché européen dispose-t-il de la sécurité juridique suffisante pour permettre les investissements à long terme nécessaires à la mise en place des infrastructures énergétiques? Et surtout, les règles existantes permettent-elles réellement d'encourager la concurrence et des retours adéquats sur ces investissements?

La concurrence est nécessaire pour garantir les meilleurs prix sur le marché: ne serait-il pas maladroit de l'imposer de façon absolue et aux dépens de la confiance que nous portent nos partenaires? Les investissements qui ne sont pas réalisés aujourd'hui sont autant d'euros supplémentaires que les Européens devront payer demain.

Il est temps pour la Commission d'exposer clairement les termes du débat pour nous permettre de prendre position. Dans ces conditions, la Commission pourrait-elle communiquer l'ensemble des éléments du dossier relatif au 3e paquet Énergie actuellement en discussion avec la Russie, avec des chiffres clairs sur les conséquences sur les prix de l'énergie pour les usagers, afin que nous puissions avancer clairement, sous la lumière du débat public, vers une solution qui protège réellement les intérêts de tous?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2013)

Conformément aux conclusions du Conseil européen de février 2011, la Commission travaille avec les autres institutions de l'UE, le secteur de l'énergie et les organisations de consommateurs pour parachever le marché intérieur. Il a déjà été démontré dans d'autres secteurs qu'il s'agit là de la base pour assurer la liberté de choix et des prix raisonnables pour les consommateurs. Le secteur de l'énergie ne fait pas exception. Le troisième paquet «énergie» est un outil important dans la réalisation de cet objectif et il n'est en aucun cas discriminatoire envers les entreprises russes ou autres. Un marché intérieur opérationnel assure également la sécurité juridique des investissements, et la récente approbation du règlement concernant les orientations pour les infrastructures énergétiques transeuropéennes contribue largement à garantir la construction des infrastructures nécessaires.

La Commission a entamé un dialogue technique et politique très constructif avec la Russie sur les questions énergétiques et a par ailleurs récemment adopté une feuille de route commune UE-Russie sur l'énergie à l'horizon 2050 ([1]). Il s'agit d'une évolution importante compte tenu du statut de la Russie en tant que principal fournisseur d'énergie de l'UE. De plus, la Commission Européenne publie régulièrement des informations sur l'état d'avancement du dialogue ([2]).

La Commission est convaincue qu'une diversité des fournisseurs, des sources d'approvisionnement et même des sources d'énergie permet de protéger au mieux les intérêts des consommateurs de l'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/doc/2013_03_eu_russia_roadmap_2050_signed.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/russia_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003815/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Ending uncertainty on the energy market in order to protect European citizens from price increases

Energy prices keep on rising. Last week the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) announced once again that the price of energy in France is still rising, to the detriment of our industry. This situation, which is threatening our recovery and our jobs, represents a danger to millions of European families, who are finding it more and more difficult to pay their energy bills, not to mention the rising prices for consumer goods.

You personally said in the House at the end of March that the cost of energy today would be higher than the cost of labour. However, within the framework of the implementation of the Third Energy Package, several international disruptions and changes in our relations with our Russian partner are raising serious fears for all investors. Does the European market have sufficient legal security for the long-term investments needed in order to put energy infrastructures in place? Most importantly, do the existing rules really encourage competition and an adequate return on those investments?

Competition is needed in order to guarantee the best prices on the market: surely it would be a bad move to impose it absolutely, at the expense of the trust which our partners place in us? If we fail to invest today, Europeans will have to pay that much more tomorrow.

It is time the Commission clearly set out the parameters of the debate, so that we can state our case. In view of the above, could the Commission disclose all aspects of the dossier relating to the Third Energy Package currently being discussed with Russia, with clear figures illustrating the impact on energy prices to users, so that we can take a clear step forward, under the light of public debate, towards a solution that truly protects everyone's interests.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

In line with the European Council conclusions of February 2011 the Commission is working with other EU institutions, the energy sector and consumer organisations to complete the internal market. It has already been shown in other sectors that this is the basis for choice and fair consumer prices — energy is not different. The Third Energy Package is an important conduit to achieve this target and is in no way discriminatory to Russian or other companies. A functioning internal market also creates the legal security for investments and the recently approved Regulation on Guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure goes a long way to ensuring that key infrastructure is built.

The Commission has a very constructive technical and political dialogue with Russia on energy matters and has recently also jointly adopted an EU-Russia Energy Roadmap 2050 ([1]). This is important in light of Russia's position as a key energy supplier to the EU. The Commission also regularly publishes information on the progress of the dialogue ([2]).

The Commission is firmly of the view that EU consumers' interests are best protected by a diversity of suppliers, supply sources and even energy sources.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/doc/2013_03_eu_russia_roadmap_2050_signed.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/russia/russia_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003817/13
alla Commissione
Marco Scurria (PPE) e Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sentenza della corte d'appello di Leeuwarden

Martedì 2 aprile 2013 la corte d'appello di Leeuwarden (Paesi Bassi) ha pronunciato una sentenza stabilendo che non deve essere vietata l'attività di una fondazione che promuove la pedofilia affermando che i testi e le foto presenti sul sito web della fondazione non contravvenivano la legge e aggiungendo che il fatto stesso che alcuni dei suoi membri siano stati condannati per reati sessuali non era connesso al lavoro della fondazione stessa.

Questa sentenza ribalta la sentenza di primo grado, frutto dell'azione dello scorso anno da parte del tribunale civile di Assen (Paesi Bassi) che aveva ingiunto lo scioglimento del gruppo «Stitching Martijn» rilevando che le sue proposte sui contatti sessuali tra adulti e bambini erano contrarie alle norme e ai valori della società olandese.

Secondo la corte d'appello, le proposte per la liberalizzazione della pedofilia sono considerate come una seria contravvenzione di alcuni principi del sistema penale olandese e in particolare, per quanto riguarda la minimizzazione dei pericoli dei contatti sessuali con giovani.

Considerando che la pedofilia è un atto criminale che devasta un bambino sia dal punto di vista fisico che psichico;

Considerando che non c'è nessun fondamento scientifico che possa considerare «normale» o «naturale» un atto sessuale fra un adulto e un bambino;

Cosa intende fare la Commissione per contrastare una sentenza contraria a tutti i principi etici, culturali, giuridici e scientifici su cui si fonda la UE?

Ritiene che le ragioni addotte dalla corte olandese rispettino i principi e i valori dell'Unione europea espressi anche nella direttiva n. 2011/92/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 13 dicembre 2011?

Non ritiene che questa pronuncia possa costituire un pericoloso precedente per sentenze successive in casi analoghi?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2013)

La Commissione non interviene in casi individuali; in questo caso specifico inoltre non è ancora stata emessa la sentenza definitiva e i pubblici ministeri hanno comunque dichiarato la loro intenzione di presentare ricorso contro tale sentenza.

La Commissione si impegna nella lotta contro ogni forma di abuso e sfruttamento sessuale dei minori. Al momento sta sostenendo e monitorando l'adozione da parte degli Stati membri dell'Unione della direttiva 2011/93/UE relativa alla lotta contro l'abuso e lo sfruttamento sessuale dei minori e la pornografia minorile ([1]). Tale direttiva, adottata dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio nel dicembre 2011, armonizza le definizioni di venti fattispecie di reato, stabilisce livelli minimi per le sanzioni penali e facilita segnalazioni, indagini e azioni penali. La direttiva non fa esplicito riferimento alla questione delle organizzazioni che promuovono l'abuso sessuale dei minori, ma consente l'incriminazione per istigazione, favoreggiamento e concorso in tali reati. Spetta ora agli Stati membri porre in atto la direttiva e decidere se introdurre legislazioni nazionali che contengano disposizioni relative non solo all'istituzione dei reati di abuso minorile, ma anche al divieto di istituire tali organizzazioni e/o al loro scioglimento coatto.

([1]) GU L 335 del 17.12.2011, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003817/13
to the Commission
Marco Scurria (PPE) and Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Ruling of the Leeuwarden Court of Appeal

On Tuesday 2 April 2013, the Leeuwarden Court of Appeal in the Netherlands ruled that the activity of a foundation that promotes paedophilia could not be banned, finding that the texts and photographs on the foundation's website did not break the law, and adding that the fact that some of its members had been convicted of sexual offences was irrelevant to the foundation's work.

This ruling overturns the ruling at first instance, which was issued in a case last year by the civil court in Assen (Netherlands), and which had ordered the 'Stitching Martijn' group to disband, finding that its views on sexual contact between adults and children went against the standards and values of Dutch society.

According to the Court of Appeal, proposals to liberalise paedophilia seriously violated several principles of the Dutch judicial system, particularly as regards minimising the risks of sexual contact with children.

Paedophilia is a criminal act that is physically and psychologically devastating for a child.

There are absolutely no scientific grounds for considering a sexual act between an adult and a child 'normal' or 'natural'.

What will the Commission do to oppose a ruling that goes against every ethical, cultural, legal and scientific principle on which the EU is built?

Does it think that the grounds given by the Dutch court respect the principles and values of the EU, as also expressed in Directive No 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011?

Does it not think that this verdict might set a dangerous precedent for subsequent rulings in similar cases?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission does not intervene in individual cases; furthermore, in this particular case, no final verdict has been issued yet and the public prosecution services have announced their intention to appeal the decision.

The Commission is committed to fighting child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in all its forms. It is currently in the process of supporting and monitoring the implementation of Directive 93/2011/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography ([1]) by the EU Member States. This directive, which was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2011, approximates the definition of 20 offences, sets minimum levels for criminal penalties, and facilitates reporting, investigation and prosecution. While it does not directly address the question of organisations promoting child sexual abuse, it provides for the criminalisation of incitement and aiding and abetting to commit these crimes. It is now up to the Member States to implement the directive and to decide whether to introduce national legislation providing not only for the criminalisation of the offence of child abuse, but also for the prohibition and/or dissolution of any such organisation.

([1]) OJ L 335/1, 17.12.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003818/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rischio di contaminazione di falda acquifera a Marano Vicentino (VI), dovuta all'ampliamento di una discarica in violazione delle direttive 2011/92/UE e 1999/31/CE

In località Vianelle, nel comune di Marano Vicentino (VI), è sita l'omonima discarica (attualmente di proprietà della Servizi S.r.l.) che sconfina in parte nel territorio del comune di Thiene (VI). La struttura, classificata ancora oggi impropriamente come discarica per inerti volta alla ricomposizione ambientale della cava sulla quale insiste (in parte ancora attiva), per effetto di una serie di autorizzazioni della Provincia di Vicenza, succedutesi nel corso del tempo, è arrivata ad assumere caratteristiche diverse da quelle originarie e a raggiungere dimensioni abnormi, con volume ricettivo pari a circa 3.600.000 m^3 di rifiuti su una superficie di oltre 230.000 m^2. Quanto alle tipologie di rifiuti conferibili all'impianto — da ultimo grazie al decreto provinciale n. 62/Suolo Rifiuti/2012 del 20.04.2012, che ha aumentato di ulteriori 13 nuovi codici CER le categorie ammesse ([1]) — la discarica è ora autorizzata a ricevere rifiuti corrispondenti a ben 62 diversi codici CER, 37 dei quali classificabili di volta in volta come pericolosi o non pericolosi a seconda delle concentrazioni di determinate sostanze in essi presenti all'esito di analisi chimiche all'uopo effettuate ([2]). Come rilevato da una perizia ([3]), inoltre, l'impianto è separato solo da una sottile barriera impermeabile artificiale (che dovrebbe avere invece spessore pari al doppio) dallo strato ghiaioso — sabbioso a elevata permeabilità sovrastante una fondamentale falda acquifera utilizzata per l'approvvigionamento di acqua potabile dagli acquedotti della zona, che servono oltre 700.000 abitanti. Attese l'attuale volumetria e tipologia dei rifiuti autorizzati, la notevole dimensione raggiunta della struttura e la peculiare ubicazione della medesima, la nuova autorizzazione all'esercizio ([4]) di cui al succitato decreto avrebbe dovuto essere preceduta, ai sensi dell'articolo 2, comma 1 della direttiva 2011/92/UE, dall'effettuazione di una VIA (che invece è stata omessa, al pari di qualsiasi consultazione delle autorità ambientali e dei Comuni interessati); risultano, altresì, omessi gli adempimenti di cui all'articolo 8 della direttiva «Discariche» 1999/31/CE.

Tutto ciò premesso, la Commissione

1. Come intende reagire a tali violazioni della normativa comunitaria di settore?

2. In virtù del principio di precauzione sancito all'articolo 191 del TFUE, non ritiene inoltre urgente la questione ambientale, considerando che un incidente in loco — si ricordano gli eventi sismici che hanno colpito la vicina regione dell'Emilia Romagna nel 2012 — comporterebbe il sicuro contatto tra percolato della discarica e falda?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

La Commissione non è al corrente del cambiamento delle condizioni operative della discarica di Vianelle. Le competenti autorità nazionali saranno invitate a trasmettere le informazioni necessarie per determinare se sussistano le violazioni segnalate dall'onorevole deputato.

([1]) Tra questi: CER 17 03 02, CER 19 12 12 e CER 10 01 17.
([2]) Cfr. punto 6 dell'introduzione all'allegato alla decisione della Commissione 2000/532/CE, recante l'elenco UE dei rifiuti.
([3]) Cfr. sul punto e in merito ai dati presenti nell'intera interrogazione la perizia del geologo Dott. Pier Luigi Marchetto di data 25.7.2012, eseguita su incarico del Comune di Marano Vicentino (VI), reperibile al seguente link: http://goo.gl/46AXX.
([4]) Cfr. CGUE 7.01.2004, C-201/02 ove si considera «autorizzazione» anche il provvedimento con il quale l'Amministrazione fissi nuove condizioni per l'esercizio di un'opera. In termini: CGUE, 4.5.2006, C-290/2003 e CGUE, 24.10.1996, C-72/95.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003818/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Risk of contamination of the aquifer at Marano Vicentino (province of Vicenza) due to the extension of a landfill in breach of Directives 2011/92/EU and 1999/31/EC

Vianelle, in the municipality of Marano Vicentino, in the province of Vicenza, is the site of a landfill of the same name (currently owned by Servizi S.r.l.), part of which stretches into the municipality of Thiene, also in the province of Vicenza. Due to a series of permits issued by the Vicenza provincial authorities over the years, the landfill, still now wrongly classified as a landfill for inert waste for the environmental rehabilitation of the quarry on which it stands (still partly in use), is now quite different in nature from how it was originally and has become abnormally large, holding around 3.6 million m^3 of waste and covering a surface area of over 230 000 m^3. In terms of the kinds of waste dumped at the site — Provincial Decree No 62/Soil Waste/2012 of 20 April 2012, recently increased the number of permitted waste categories ([1]) by adding another 13 European Waste Catalogue (EWC) codes — the landfill can now accept waste with some 62 different EWC codes, 37 of which may sometimes be classified as hazardous and sometimes non-hazardous depending on the concentrations of certain substances in the waste after chemical analysis ([2]). Moreover, as shown in a study ([3]), the landfill is separated from the highly permeable gravel-sand layer only by a thin synthetic impermeable barrier (which should be twice as thick as it is), which lies above a vital aquifer used to supply drinking water from aqueducts in the area, which serve over 700 000 residents. In view of the current volume and type of waste permitted, the significant size of the landfill and its particular location, the new operating permit ([4]) set out in the aforementioned decree should have been preceded, under Article 2(1) of Directive 2011/92/EU, by an environmental impact assessment (which was not done, just as there was no consultation of the environmental authorities and the municipalities concerned). The requirements set out in Article 8 of the 'Landfill' Directive 1999/31/EC have also not been fulfilled.

1. What action does the Commission plan to take in response to these breaches of EU legislation governing the sector?

2. Under the precautionary principle enshrined in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, does it not think that the environmental issue is pressing, given that an incident at the site — the earthquakes that struck the neighbouring region of Emilia-Romagna in 2012 should be remembered here — would certainly lead to leachate from the landfill coming into contact with the aquifer?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the change in the operating conditions of the Vianelle landfill. Information on this matter will be requested from the competent national authorities in order to determine if the breaches referred to by the Honourable Member can be substantiated.

([1]) Including: EWC 17 03 02, EWC 19 12 12 and EWC 10 01 17.
([2]) See point 6 of the introduction to the annex to Commission Decision 2000/532/EC on the European list of waste.
([3]) On this point and regarding the figures used throughout the question, see the study by geologist Dr Pier Luigi Marchetto of 25 July 2012, conducted for the municipality of Marano Vicentino (province of Vicenza), which is available at the following link: http://goo.gl/46AXX.
([4]) See Judgment of the Court of 7 January 2004 in Case C-201/02, in which a measure whereby the administration lays down new conditions for carrying out operations is also considered 'consent'. Also on the issue: Judgment of the Court of 4 May 2006 in Case C-290/2003 and Judgment of the Court of 24 October 1996 in Case C-72/95.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003819/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: SEA Handling Milano

Visto che la Commissione europea ha stabilito che l'aiuto di Stato dell'importo pari a circa 360 milioni di EUR concesso tra il 2002 e il 2010 da SEA, l'operatore pubblico che gestisce gli aeroporti di Milano Malpensa e Milano Linate, alla sua controllata SEA Handling, operatore dell'assistenza a terra in tali aeroporti, è incompatibile con le norme UE in materia di aiuti di Stato.

Considerato che contro questa sanzione SEA, il Comune di Milano e il governo italiano hanno chiesto una sospensiva della sentenza e che gli stessi ricorrenti hanno anche fatto un ricorso nel merito alla Corte di giustizia.

Visto che la società SEA Handling, controllata da Sea S.p.A. ha 2400 dipendenti, che nel corso degli anni sono stati definiti processi organizzativi più efficienti, ma che al momento sono a rischio circa 800 posti di lavoro.

Considerato che sarebbe auspicabile una sospensione della sentenza come chiedono il governo italiano e il Comune di Milano per consentire di trovare una soluzione per i lavoratori che rischiano di perdere il posto, acuendo una già drammatica situazione di disoccupazione in Italia e anche in Lombarda.

Come valuta la Commissione la richiesta di sospendere temporaneamente la sentenza per evitare annose conseguenze sui lavoratori?

Quali iniziative, secondo la Commissione, possono essere intraprese a favore dei lavoratori?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2013)

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole deputato, con la decisione del 19 dicembre 2012, la Commissione ha concluso il procedimento d'indagine sul capitale trasferito da SEA alla sua controllata SEA Handling dal 2002 al 2010. La Commissione ha deciso che ciò rappresentava un aiuto di Stato incompatibile con il mercato interno, che deve essere recuperato dal beneficiario.

La Commissione comprende perfettamente le preoccupazioni espresse dall'onorevole deputato relative ai rischi della perdita di posti di lavoro come conseguenza dell'attuazione della decisione della Commissione. Tuttavia, la Commissione ha il dovere di intervenire quando gli Stati membri erogano un aiuto di Stato incompatibile e illegale, che determina distorsioni della concorrenza nel mercato interno e deve ordinare il recupero di tale aiuto.

Al contrario, non è prerogativa della Commissione pronunciarsi sulla richiesta di una sospensione dell'ordine di recupero presentato dal Comune di Milano e dal beneficiario. Il tribunale deciderà se in questo caso tale sospensione può essere concessa.

In attesa di una decisione del tribunale, i servizi della Commissione sono naturalmente in contatto con le autorità italiane per esaminare le modalità percorribili per applicare la decisione della Commissione conformemente alle norme vigenti dell'UE, ma senza mettere a rischio l'operatività dell'aeroporto e tenendo in debita considerazione i rivolti sociali della decisione.

Nel contempo, le autorità italiane possono considerare l'uso di altri strumenti specifici a sostegno della forza lavoro, come gli aiuti per la riconversione e l'istruzione tecnica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003819/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: SEA Handling Milan

The Commission has concluded that around EUR 360 million of state aid granted between 2002 and 2010 by SEA, the state-owned operator of Milan Malpensa and Milan Linate airports, to its subsidiary SEA Handling, the ground handling operator at those airports, is incompatible with EU state aid rules.

SEA, the municipality of Milan and the Italian Government have appealed for the penalty imposed to be suspended and the plaintiffs have also lodged an appeal before the European Court of Justice.

SEA Handling, which is controlled by SEA SpA, employs 2 400 people. Over the years more efficient organisational processes have been devised, but around 800 jobs are currently at risk.

It would be desirable for the ruling to be suspended, as requested by the Italian Government and the municipality of Milan, in order to make it possible to find a solution for the workers at risk of losing their jobs, which would make an already serious unemployment situation in Italy and in the Lombardy region even worse.

What view does the Commission take of the request to temporarily suspend the ruling to avoid lasting consequences for workers?

In the Commission's view, what steps can be taken to support the workers?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, by the decision of 19 December 2012, the Commission concluded its investigation into the capital transferred by SEA to its subsidiary SEA Handling from 2002 to 2010. It decided that this constituted state aid incompatible with the internal market, which must be recovered from the beneficiary.

The Commission fully understands the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member related to unemployment risks as a consequence of implementation of the Commission's decision. However, the Commission has a duty to intervene when Member States grant illegal and incompatible state aid, which distorts competition in the internal market, and must order the recovery of such aid.

It is, on the contrary, not the Commission's prerogative to decide on the request for suspension of the recovery order lodged by the municipality of Milan and the beneficiary. The General Court will decide on whether such suspension can be granted in this case.

Pending the ruling of the General Court, the Commission's services are of course in contact with the Italian authorities to explore all possible ways to enforce the Commission's decision in line with existing EU rules but without jeopardising the airports' continued operation taking into due account the social aspects of its decision.

At the same time, the Italian authorities may consider the use of other specific instruments available to support workforce, such as aid for the reconversion, technical education.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003820/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Concorrenza compagnie petrolifere in Italia

Nei giorni scorsi è giunta a conclusione in Italia un'indagine, durata oltre un anno e condotta da Guardia di Finanza e Procura di Varese, in merito a presunte manovre speculative organizzate dalle principali compagnie petrolifere operanti in Italia per mantenere artificiosamente alti i prezzi dei carburanti ai distributori.

Secondo questa indagine, partita da un esposto di un'associazione a tutela dei consumatori, i sette principali operatori petroliferi italiani si sarebbero accordati per livellare volontariamente i prezzi dei prodotti alla pompa, rendendo di fatto nullo qualsiasi vantaggio per i consumatori legato alle comuni regole di concorrenza.

In Italia si è giunti così ad avere i prezzi dei carburanti più alti d'Europa, non sempre in linea con le normali oscillazioni legate al costo del greggio.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa indagine?

Come valuta il mercato dei carburanti in Italia? Ritiene siano rispettate le norme legate alla libera concorrenza e, nel caso, quali misure intende intraprendere?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'indagine penale condotta dalla Guardia di Finanza e dalla Procura di Varese circa una presunta condotta fraudolenta delle principali imprese petrolifere attive in Italia.

La Commissione segue con attenzione gli sviluppi del mercato nel settore dei carburanti in Italia e negli altri Stati membri dell'UE. Nella recente indagine sul settore nazionale dei carburanti al dettaglio, l'Autorità italiana garante della concorrenza ha rilevato che si sta delineando un nuovo equilibrio competitivo per diversi motivi: l'eliminazione di determinate barriere amministrative all'accesso al mercato, la diffusione di impianti self-service per promuovere le riduzioni dei prezzi al dettaglio, l'incoraggiamento di nuove iniziative senza marchio da parte dei grandi distributori alimentari e il lancio di campagne tariffarie temporanee da parte di alcune imprese petrolifere. L'Autorità ha concluso che l'attuale struttura di oligopolio dei mercati italiani dei carburanti al dettaglio può ancora migliorare, per esempio favorendo l'ingresso di operatori aggressivi ed efficienti, fra cui reti senza marchio, in proporzione sufficiente da destabilizzare la struttura oligopolistica.

Se necessario, la Commissione non esiterà ad agire, direttamente o in coordinamento con l'Autorità italiana garante della concorrenza, contro il comportamento collusivo delle imprese o l'abuso di posizione dominante sui mercati dei carburanti al dettaglio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003820/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Competition between oil companies in Italy

In Italy, the tax police and the Varese Public Prosecutor's Office have recently completed an investigation, which took over a year, into alleged speculation by the main oil companies operating in Italy, in order to keep the price of fuel at the pump artificially high.

According to the investigation, which was launched after a complaint by a consumer protection association, the seven main oil companies in Italy agreed voluntarily to fix the price of fuel at the pump, effectively wiping out any benefit consumers might derive from common competition rules.

Italy now has the highest fuel prices in Europe, which do not always reflect normal fluctuations in the price of crude oil.

Is the Commission aware of this investigation?

What view does it take of the fuel market in Italy? Does it think that the rules on free competition are being respected and what action will it take, if required?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the criminal investigation by Varese's tax police and Public Prosecutor's Office into the alleged fraudulent behaviour of major fuel companies operating in Italy.

The Commission closely follows the market developments in the fuel sector in Italy and in the other EU Member States. In its recent inquiry into the national fuel retail sector, the Italian Competition Authority observed that a new competitive equilibrium is emerging due to, among others, the elimination of certain administrative barriers to entry, the fostering of self-service devices to promote retail price reductions, the encouragement of new unbranded initiatives from large retail food distributors, and the launch of temporary pricing campaigns by certain branded fuel companies. The Authority concluded that there is still scope for improving the current oligopolistic structure of the Italian fuel retail markets, for instance by encouraging entry of aggressive and efficient operators, such as un-branded networks, in a sufficient scale so as to disrupt the oligopolistic structure.

If required, the Commission will not hesitate to act, either by itself or in coordination with the Italian Competition Authority, against collusive behaviour of undertakings or abuse of a dominant position on the Italian retail fuel markets.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003821/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Elbphilharmonie Amburgo

Nel 2007 ad Amburgo sono iniziati i lavori della *Elbphilharmonie*, la sala concerti nella Hafen City, il quartiere portuale realizzato ad Amburgo per ospitare lo shipping internazionale.

Rispetto all'ambizioso piano iniziale che prevedeva la consegna nel 2010, i lavori hanno subito forti ritardi, c'è stato un blocco di 17 mesi a causa di un contenzioso fra la città di Amburgo e la società di costruzioni Hochtief, e le ultime previsioni parlano del 2017 per la consegna finale.

Anche i costi sono lievitati a dismisura, passando dai 77 milioni di euro preventivati ai circa 575 milioni di euro di oggi.

Si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se tale opera ha beneficiato e in che misura di fondi diretti o indiretti erogati dall'UE;

2. se alla luce dei ritardi e dell'aumento di costi tali eventuali aiuti verranno modificati o addirittura ritirati.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2013)

Secondo le informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione responsabile per il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) ad Amburgo il progetto «Elbphilharmonie» non beneficia di alcun finanziamento da parte del FESR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003821/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Elbe Philharmonic Hall in Hamburg

In 2007 in Hamburg, work began on the construction of the Elbe Philharmonic Hall, the concert hall in HafenCity, Hamburg's port area built to handle international shipping.

According to the ambitious original plan, the concert hall was scheduled for completion in 2010, but since then the construction works have suffered serious delays and were brought to a standstill for 17 months owing to a dispute between the city of Hamburg and the construction company Hochtief. Completion is now scheduled for 2017, according to the latest estimates.

Costs have also spiralled out of all proportion, rising from the EUR 77 million originally estimated to around EUR 575 million now.

1. Have these works received any direct or indirect funding from the EU and, if so, how much?

2. In view of the delays and the increased costs, will any aid be amended or even withdrawn?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

According to information provided by the managing authority responsible for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in Hamburg, no ERDF co-financing is involved in the 'Elbphilharmonie' project.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003822/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Aeroporto di Berlino-Brandeburgo

Il progetto dell'aeroporto di Berlino-Brandeburgo «Willy Brandt» nasce allo scopo di concentrare l'intero traffico aereo della capitale tedesca in un unico scalo nell'ottica di maggiori economie di gestione e di una migliore efficienza del sistema aeroportuale stesso. L'obiettivo ambizioso era quello di creare l'aeroporto più moderno d'Europa, tra i primi dieci per numero di passeggeri annuali.

Purtroppo i lavori, iniziati solo nel 2006 nonostante che la delibera risalga al 1995, hanno subito forti ritardi, per cui l'inaugurazione è stata rinviata per ben quattro volte. In occasione dell'ultima inaugurazione, prevista lo scorso giugno, alcune compagnie aeree avevano addirittura lanciato forti campagne pubblicitarie e venduto già biglietti con nuove rotte da e per l'aeroporto.

Ovviamente i ritardi dovuti a errori nella progettazione e nella costruzione hanno provocato il raddoppio dei costi — stimati all'inizio in circa 3 miliardi di euro — oltre a costringere le autorità a spendere ben 50 milioni di euro per i lavori di ammodernamento dell'aeroporto di Tegel che avrebbe dovuto essere dismesso il 27 ottobre di quest'anno. Ora i più ottimisti parlano del 2014 per l'inaugurazione anche se di recente la rivista tedesca «Bild am Sonntag» ha rivelato che per permettere al nuovo aeroporto di Berlino di entrare in funzione bisognerà eliminare circa 20000 difetti strutturali. Qualcuno suggerisce persino di ricostruire tutto ex novo.

Alla luce di questa situazione, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se e in che misura tale opera ha beneficiato di fondi diretti o indiretti erogati dall'UE;

2. se a causa dei ritardi e dell'aumento di costi tali eventuali aiuti verranno modificati o addirittura ritirati?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2013)

In merito alle questioni riguardanti il finanziamento dell'UE per l'aeroporto Berlino-Brandeburgo, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare la risposta all'interrogazione scritta P-000481/2013 ([1]) di Michael Theurer.

([1]) Disponibile all'indirizzo http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003822/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Berlin Brandenburg Airport

The Berlin Brandenburg 'Willy Brandt' Airport project was conceived with the aim of bringing together all of the German capital's air traffic at a single airport to make greater savings in running costs and to make the airport system more efficient. The ambitious aim was to build the most modern airport in Europe, featuring among the top ten busiest airports in terms of annual passenger numbers.

Unfortunately, the construction works, which only started in 2006 despite the decision to construct the airport dating back to 1995, have suffered serious delays, leading to the opening being put back four times. For the latest opening, which was scheduled for June 2012, several airlines had even launched major publicity campaigns and already sold tickets for new routes from and to the airport.

Naturally, the delays caused by design and construction errors have led to costs, which were originally estimated at around EUR 3 billion, doubling. The authorities have also been forced to spend some EUR 50 million on modernising Tegel Airport, which was due to close on 27 October of this year. According to the most optimistic estimates, the airport will now open in 2014, although the German newspaper *Bild am Sonntag* recently reported that some 20 000 structural faults would need to be rectified before Berlin's new airport could become operational. It has even been suggested to rebuild the whole airport from scratch.

1. Have these works received any direct or indirect funding from the EU and, if so, how much?

2. Will any aid be amended or even withdrawn as a result of the delays and increased costs?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

As regards the questions concerning EU funding of the Berlin Brandenburg airport the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-000481/2013 ([1]) by Mr Michael Theurer.

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003823/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Porto Jade Weser

Il porto Jade Weser di Wilhelmshaven, inaugurato nel settembre 2012 come il più grande porto container progettato e realizzato in Europa negli ultimi venti anni, a causa del mercato in piena crisi non corrisponde alle aspettative e previsioni iniziali che puntavano a movimentare un traffico di 2,7 milioni di TEU.

Al rischio concreto di creare una cattedrale nel deserto bisogna aggiungere i difetti strutturali che hanno causato l'apertura di crepe nelle paratie che dovrebbero difenderlo dalle onde del Mare del Nord, mettendo a rischio la sicurezza del terminal stesso.

Un secondo muro di cemento, una vera e propria paratia bis, è stato eretto a protezione della prima, ma secondo alcuni esperti sembra comunque non essere sufficiente a mettere in sicurezza la struttura che continua a rilasciare sabbia dalle fenditure e che, se il processo non si arresterà, potrebbe andare incontro a gravi problemi di assetto.

Considerato che tutto ciò ha provocato un forte aumento dei costi e che in prossimità di Wilhelmshaven si trova anche il parco naturale Nationalpark Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione, anche tramite contatti con le autorità tedesche preposte al controllo e alla sorveglianza;

2. se ha intrapreso eventuali azioni per tutelare la sicurezza della zona;

3. se e in che misura tale opera ha beneficiato di fondi diretti o indiretti erogati dall'UE?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2013)

1.-2. Ad oggi la Commissione non ha ricevuto informazioni ufficiali o denunce in merito alla situazione o a potenziali rischi per la sicurezza, come espresso nell'interrogazione scritta dell'onorevole deputato.

3. La Commissione può confermare che tale opera non ha ricevuto fondi dal programma della rete transeuropea dei trasporti.

Nel periodo di programmazione 2000-2006 con la decisione C(2006)4824 del 5 ottobre 2006 la Commissione ha approvato un contributo del FESR di 50 milioni di euro nell'ambito dell'obiettivo 2 del programma per il Niedersachsen. La misura cofinanziata dal FESR era principalmente legata al riempimento idraulico dello spazio (Aufspülung der Flächen mit dem Sand). Questa misura cofinanziata è stata chiusa prima della fine del periodo di programmazione 2000-2006.

La Commissione è al corrente che la BEI ha stanziato 325 milioni di euro per l'infrastruttura del terminal container d'acque profonde. Per ulteriori informazioni sul progetto della BEI, si prega di rivolgersi direttamente a tale istituzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003823/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: JadeWeserPort

Because the market is in crisis, the JadeWeserPort in Wilhelmshaven, which was opened in September 2012 as the largest container port designed and built in Europe in the last 20 years, has not lived up to initial expectations and predictions, which anticipated traffic of 2.7 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

At the very real risk of having built a white elephant, it should also be mentioned that there are structural faults, which have caused cracks to open up in the bulkheads that are supposed to protect it from the North Sea, putting the safety of the terminal itself in jeopardy.

A second cement wall, really a second bulkhead, has been erected to protect the first, but according to some experts, it is not enough to secure the structure: sand continues to pour out of the cracks and, if the process is not stopped, it could run into serious structural problems.

All this has caused costs to rise sharply. The Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer national park is also located near to Wilhelmshaven.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation, including through dealings with the German authorities responsible for inspection and monitoring?

2. Has it taken any action to ensure the safety of the area?

3. Have these works received any direct or indirect funding from the EU and, if so, how much?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission has to date not received any official information or complaint about the mentioned situation or potential safety risks as referred to in the question by the Honourable Member.

3. The Commission can confirm that these works have not received any funding from the programme of the trans-European transport network.

In the programming period 2000-2006 with decision C(2006)4824 of 5 October 2006 the Commission approved an ERDF contribution of EUR 50 million within the Objective 2 programme for Niedersachsen. The ERDF co-financed measure was mainly related to the hydraulic filling of the space (Aufspülung der Flächen mit dem Sand). This measure has been closed by the end of the programming period 2000-2006.

The Commission is aware that the EIB has provided a loan of EUR 325 million to the deep-water container terminal infrastructure. For further information on the EIB project, please address the EIB directly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003824/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: 15 000 imprese italiane fallite a causa del ritardo dei pagamenti

Dai dati elaborati dalla CGIA Mestre, l'Associazione artigiani piccole imprese di Mestre, risulta che dall'inizio del 2008 alla fine del 2012 ben 15 000 imprese italiane hanno dovuto dichiarare fallimento a causa dei ritardi dei pagamenti soprattutto da parte delle pubbliche amministrazioni, e in Italia si sono persi circa 60 000 posti di lavoro. Attualmente le pubbliche amministrazioni del nostro paese devono alle imprese, per appalti o forniture, circa 91 miliardi di euro.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza di questi dati?

2. valuta di intervenire presso il governo italiano per risolvere in maniera definitiva il problema dei ritardi dei pagamenti della pubblica amministrazione?

3. può fare un quadro della situazione negli altri Stati membri stimando quante imprese hanno chiuso in seguito al fenomeno del ritardo dei pagamenti?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2013)

I ritardi nei pagamenti possono indubbiamente avere effetti negativi sull'economia. Questo si ripercuote sulla liquidità delle imprese complicandone la gestione finanziaria, con conseguenze sulla concorrenzialità e vitalità delle stesse, in particolare quando si tratta di PMI. I ritardi di pagamento possono causare il fallimento di aziende altrimenti redditizie e sono così potenzialmente in grado di scatenare nella peggiore delle ipotesi una serie di fallimenti lungo la catena di fornitura. Tale rischio aumenta enormemente nei periodi di recessione economica, in cui l'accesso ai finanziamenti risulta particolarmente difficile.

In tale ambito una soluzione realistica al debito commerciale italiano può essere rappresentata da un piano di liquidazione che miri a riportarlo in tempi relativamente brevi su livelli non condizionati da ritardi nei pagamenti; la liquidazione dei debiti commerciali potrebbe agevolare questo processo ([1]).

L'8 aprile il governo italiano ha adottato un decreto legge ad effetto immediato che impegna l'Italia a pagare 40 miliardi di euro di arretrati nel corso del biennio 2013-2014. Lo stesso decreto legge fornisce inoltre una quantificazione ufficiale del debito commerciale, ripartita per amministrazione debitrice e data di scadenza, consentendo così di quantificare la percentuale in sofferenza. Nel comunicato stampa ([2]) del 9 aprile 2013 la Commissione ha ribadito il suo sostegno al piano del governo italiano di accelerare il processo di liquidazione dello stock di debito commerciale, riducendo in tal modo i vincoli di liquidità delle imprese e sostenendo la ripresa economica. La Commissione seguirà con attenzione il processo di approvazione di tale provvedimento nel parlamento nazionale e la sua attuazione.

([1]) Cfr. MEMO/13/231.
([2]) Cfr. MEMO/13/317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003824/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: 15 000 Italian companies are bankrupt because of late payments

According to figures compiled by CGIA Mestre, the Mestre association of craftspeople and small enterprises, some 15 000 Italian companies were forced into bankruptcy between the beginning of 2008 and the end of 2012 because of late payments, particularly on the part of public administrations, and around 60 000 jobs were lost in Italy. Public administrations in Italy currently owe companies around EUR 91 billion in contracts or supplies.

1. Is the Commission aware of these figures?

2. Does it plan to call on the Italian Government to provide a definitive solution to the problem of late payments by the public administration?

3. Can it give an overview of the situation in other Member States, with an estimate of how many companies have closed down as a result of late payments?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

Late payments can indeed have negative impacts on the economy. This phenomenon impinges on liquid assets and complicates the financial management of enterprises, affecting the competitiveness and viability of companies, notably SMEs. Payment delays can be responsible for bankruptcy of otherwise viable businesses with the potential to trigger, in the worst case scenario, a series of bankruptcies across the supply chain. This risk greatly increases in periods of economic downturn when access to financing is particularly difficult.

In this context, a realistic solution to the Italian commercial debt overhang is likely to involve a liquidation plan with the objective of bringing such debt to levels not related to payment delays within a relatively short timeframe and that the liquidation of overdue commercial debt would represent a mitigating factor ([1]).

On 8 April, the Italian Government adopted an immediately-effective decree-law that provides for the payment of EUR 40 bn of arrears over 2013-14. It also provides for an official quantification of trade debt, according to the administration owing it and by date of expiry, thus allowing to quantify the proportion that is overdue. In a press statement ([2]) on 9 April 2013, the Commission reaffirmed its support to the Italian government's plan to accelerate the liquidation of the stock of trade debt, thus easing firms' liquidity constraints and supporting economic recovery. The Commission will carefully monitor its approval process through the national Parliament and its implementation.

([1]) MEMO/13/231.
([2]) MEMO/13/317.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003825/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Prijs voor het meenemen van huisdieren op veerboten van en naar het Verenigd Koninkrijk

Door de aanpassing van het *Pet Travel Scheme* van het Verenigd Koninkrijk aan de Europese wetgeving mogen passagiers van veerboten sinds 1 januari 2012 hun huisdieren meenemen op oversteken tussen havens in EU-lidstaten en het Verenigd Koninkrijk.

Alle aanbieders van veerdiensten tussen het Verenigd Koninkrijk en het Europese vasteland rekenen voor het meenemen van een huisdier een administratiekost van minimaal 15 pond aan, terwijl dezelfde aanbieders geen bijkomende kost aanrekenen voor het meenemen van huisdieren op oversteken van gelijkaardige lengte tussen het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Ierland.

1. Is dit prijsbeleid van de commerciële veerbedrijven die van respectievelijk het Europese vasteland en Ierland naar het Verenigd Koninkrijk opereren volgens de Commissie te rechtvaardigen volgens de Europese wetgeving?

2. Kan de Commissie controleren of er naar aanleiding van de nieuwe regeling prijsafspraken over de administratiekost voor het meenemen van huisdieren getroffen zijn tussen de bedrijven die veerdiensten tussen het Verenigd Koninkrijk en het Europese vasteland aanbieden?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(24 mei 2013)

1. Het prijsbeleid voor het vervoer van huisdieren wordt niet geregeld door de Europese wetgeving inzake passagiersrechten. Deze handelspraktijken moeten dus worden getoetst aan het nationale consumentenrecht.

2. Prijsafspraken tussen concurrerende bedrijven vallen onder artikel 101 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU). Krachtens dit artikel zijn overeenkomsten en onderling afgestemde feitelijke gedragingen die de mededinging kunnen verhinderen, beperken of vervalsen, verboden voor zover deze de handel tussen lidstaten ongunstig kunnen beïnvloeden. In de door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde zaak lijken het bedrag van de toeslag en de manier waarop de bedrijven de toeslag voor het vervoer van huisdieren toepassen, sterk van elkaar te verschillen. Dit blijkt eveneens uit een vluchtige controle van prijsoffertes. Bijgevolg lijken er geen aanwijzingen te zijn voor een schending van artikel 101 VWEU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003825/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Fees for taking pets on ferries to and from the United Kingdom

The changes to the UK Pet Travel Scheme, which have brought it into line with European legislation, have made it possible for ferry passengers to take their pets on ferry crossings between ports in EU Member States and the United Kingdom since 1 January 2012.

All ferry operators between the United Kingdom and continental Europe charge an administration fee of at least GBP 15 per pet. The same operators, however, charge no additional fee for pets on crossings of comparable length between the United Kingdom and Ireland.

1. Does the Commission believe that this price policy pursued by commercial ferry companies operating crossings between continental Europe and Ireland and the United Kingdom complies with European legislation?

2. In connection with the new rules, can the Commission check whether ferry companies operating crossings between the United Kingdom and continental Europe have made price agreements on the administration fees for taking pets abroad?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

1. European level passenger rights legislation does not regulate the pricing policies for transporting pets. Those commercial practices should therefore be examined in the light of national consumer law.

2. Price agreements between competing companies fall within the scope of Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). This Article prohibits agreements and concerted practices between undertakings which prevent, restrict or distort competition, insofar as they may affect trade between Member States. In the case mentioned by the Honourable Member of the Parliament, the level and the ways each company applies fees for the transport of pets appear very different from one another, as a cursory check of price offers illustrates. Therefore there does not seem to be any evidence of a violation of Article 101 TFEU.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003826/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Taxa aplicada em Chipre I

Tendo em conta o seguinte:

— O Governo de Chipre e o Eurogrupo chegaram a acordo relativamente a um resgate de 10 mil milhões de euros que vai evitar a bancarrota da pequena ilha mediterrânica;

— Segundo informações veiculadas na comunicação social, «os depósitos que estão nos bancos de Chipre abaixo de 100 mil euros estão garantidos e não vão sofrer qualquer perda, ao contrário do plano original da troika»;

— O acordo prevê que seja aplicada uma possível taxa de 30 % a todos os depósitos superiores a 100 mil Euros, apesar de ainda não se ter compreendido o modo prático de aplicação dessa taxa bancária aos cidadãos com conta em Chipre;

— Segundo a Presidente do Fundo Monetário Internacional, Christine Lagarde, «o acordo celebrado fornece as bases para restaurar a confiança no sistema financeiro, o que é fundamental para fomentar o crescimento». Acrescenta ainda que o plano de resgate, uma solução encontrada depois de o Parlamento cipriota ter chumbado uma versão inicial que passava pela criação de um imposto extraordinário sobre todos os depósitos, «fornece uma solução duradoura e totalmente financiada para os problemas subjacentes que Chipre enfrenta», colocando o país «num caminho sustentável para a recuperação»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual a base tributável dos depósitos? A taxa é aplicada apenas ao valor que ultrapassa os 100 mil euros, sendo este valor minimamente garantido para os depositantes?

2. As pessoas que possuem depósitos bancários superiores a 100 mil euros em bancos que não precisarem de apoio da troika também serão afetadas?

3. Serão afetados os casais que têm contas bancárias separadas, mas que, na globalidade, superam os 100 mil euros no mesmo banco?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2013)

1. Não está a ser aplicada qualquer taxa aos depósitos nos bancos de Chipre. Os depósitos acima de 100 000 EUR foram convertidos em ações em dois bancos comerciais, nomeadamente o Banco Popular de Chipre e o Banco de Chipre. Independentemente do seu montante, os depósitos junto de outras instituições de crédito não são afetados.

2. Apenas foram afetados os depósitos acima de 100 000 EUR no Banco Popular de Chipre e no Banco de Chipre. Tal foi necessário para garantir que o financiamento do défice de capital destas duas instituições pudesse ser obtido sem recorrer ao financiamento do programa. A dotação do programa foi calculada de modo a que potenciais défices de capital em outras instituições pudessem ser colmatados com o financiamento do programa.

3. Ao abrigo da Diretiva 94/19/CE relativa aos sistemas de garantia de depósitos (a Diretiva «SGD»), dois titulares de depósitos com contas separadas podem beneficiar da cobertura SGD, cada um deles em nome próprio e até 100 000 EUR por banco. O facto de serem casados não afeta esta situação. Em conformidade com o artigo 8.° da Diretiva SGD, caso partilhem uma conta coletiva, cada titular de conta tem direito a uma indemnização em relação a metade do montante depositado e por cada um até 100 000 EUR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003826/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Cyprus bank levy I

The Cypriot Government and the Eurogroup reached an agreement on a EUR 10 million bail-out to spare the small Mediterranean island from bankruptcy.

According to reports published in the media, Cypriot bank deposits of less than EUR 100 000 are safeguarded and will not suffer any losses, contrary to the plan originally proposed by the Troika.

The agreement provides for the application of a 30% tax on all deposits over EUR 100 000, although it is not yet understood how this levy will be practically applied to those with bank accounts in Cyprus.

According to the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, the agreement reached establishes the basis for restoring confidence in the financial system, which is fundamental for the promotion of growth. She also said that the bail-out plan agreed on after the Cypriot Parliament rejected an initial version which sought to impose an extraordinary tax on all deposits 'provides a durable and fully financed solution to the underlying problems facing Cyprus and provides a sustainable path toward a recovery'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. What proportion of the deposit is subject to this tax? Does the tax apply only to the amount in excess of EUR 100 000, with depositors being protected by a minimum guarantee up to this amount?

2. Will people with deposits of over EUR 100 000 in banks not requiring assistance from the Troika also be affected?

3. Will married couples with separate accounts at the same bank with a combined total of more than EUR 100 000 be affected?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

1. No tax is being imposed on deposits in Cyprus. Deposits above EUR 100 000 with two commercial banks, namely the Cyprus Popular Bank and Bank of Cyprus, have been swapped for shares in the same banks. Deposits with other credit institutions, whatever their amount, are not concerned.

2. Only deposits above EUR 100 000 at Cyprus Popular Bank and Bank of Cyprus have been affected. This was necessary in order to ensure that the funding of the capital shortfall of these two institutions could be achieved without programme money. The programme envelope has been calculated so that potential capital shortfalls at other institutions would be addressed with programme money.

3. Under Directive 94/19/EC on deposit guarantee schemes (the 'DGS' Directive), two deposit holders with separate accounts are eligible to DGS coverage each under their own name and up to EUR 100 000 per bank. This is not affected by the fact that they are married. If they share a joint account, in application of Article 8 of the DGS Directive, each account holder is entitled to compensation for half of the deposited amount, and each up to EUR 100 000.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003827/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Taxa aplicada em Chipre II

Tendo em conta o seguinte:

— O Governo de Chipre e o Eurogrupo chegaram a acordo relativamente a um resgate de 10 mil milhões de euros que vai evitar a bancarrota da pequena ilha mediterrânica;

— Segundo informações veiculadas na comunicação social, «os depósitos que estão nos bancos de Chipre abaixo de 100 mil euros estão garantidos e não vão sofrer qualquer perda, ao contrário do plano original da troika»;

— O acordo prevê que seja aplicada uma possível taxa de 30 % a todos os depósitos superiores a 100 mil euros, apesar de ainda não se ter compreendido o modo prático de aplicação dessa taxa bancária aos cidadãos com conta em Chipre;

— Segundo a Presidente do Fundo Monetário Internacional, Christine Lagarde, «o acordo celebrado fornece as bases para restaurar a confiança no sistema financeiro, o que é fundamental para fomentar o crescimento». Acrescenta ainda que o plano de resgate, uma solução encontrada depois de o Parlamento cipriota ter chumbado uma versão inicial que passava pela criação de um imposto extraordinário sobre todos os depósitos, «fornece uma solução duradoura e totalmente financiada para os problemas subjacentes que Chipre enfrenta», colocando o país «num caminho sustentável para a recuperação»;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. A taxa é aplicada se a soma dos depósitos num mesmo banco, apesar de constituídos em várias contas bancárias nesse mesmo banco, superar os 100 mil euros? Em caso afirmativo, como se processa essa taxa se um depósito for superior a 100 mil euros e outro inferior a esse valor?

2. A taxa é aplicada a depósitos superiores a 100 mil euros que cada pessoa tem no conjunto dos bancos de Chipre? Em caso afirmativo, como se processa essa taxa se um depósito for superior a 100 mil euros e outro inferior a esse valor?

3. A taxa é aplicada a depósitos superiores a 100 mil euros que cada pessoa tem em Chipre ou noutros países? Em caso afirmativo, como se processa essa taxa se um depósito for superior a 100 mil euros e outro inferior a esse valor?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(1 de julho de 2013)

As medidas que as autoridades cipriotas se comprometeram a adotar durante a reunião do Eurogrupo realizada em 25 de março de 2013 não incluem qualquer disposição relativa à aplicação de uma taxa sobre os depósitos bancários. As autoridades cipriotas assumiram o compromisso de recapitalizar o Banco de Chipre através da conversão em capitais próprios dos depósitos não garantidos com a plena contribuição dos acionistas e obrigacionistas, enquanto o Banco Popular de Chipre seria objeto de resolução com a plena contribuição dos acionistas, obrigacionistas e depositantes não garantidos. A conversão dos depósitos em capitais próprios apenas será aplicada aos depósitos junto do Banco de Chipre superiores a 100 000 EUR que não sejam elegíveis para compensação. Se um depositante detém duas ou diversas contas, a respetiva contribuição para a conversão dos depósitos em capitais próprios será extraída em primeiro lugar do depósito com prazo de vencimento mais longo e, em caso de prazos idênticos, do depósito com o saldo mais elevado.

As modalidades da resolução são descritas num decreto do Banco Central de Chipre ([1]).

([1]) http//www.centralbank.gov.cy/nqcontent.cfm-id=12631

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003827/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Cyprus bank levy II

The Cypriot Government and the Eurogroup reached an agreement on a EUR 10 million bail-out to spare the small Mediterranean island from bankruptcy.

According to reports published in the media, Cypriot bank deposits of less than EUR 100 000 are safeguarded and will not suffer any losses, contrary to the plan originally proposed by the Troika.

The agreement provides for the application of a 30% tax on all deposits over EUR 100 000, although it is not yet understood how this levy will be practically applied to those with bank accounts in Cyprus.

According to the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, the agreement reached establishes the basis for restoring confidence in the financial system, which is fundamental for the promotion of growth. She also said that the bail-out plan agreed on after the Cypriot Parliament rejected an initial version which sought to impose an extraordinary tax on all deposits 'provides a durable and fully financed solution to the underlying problems facing Cyprus and provides a sustainable path toward a recovery'.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Will the levy be applied where more than EUR 100 000 is deposited by the same person in the same bank, even if it is held in various accounts? If so, how will the levy be applied if one account holds more than EUR 100 000 and another holds less?

2. Will the levy be applied to deposits totalling over EUR 100 000 held by the same person in different Cypriot banks? If so, how will the levy be applied if one account holds more than EUR 100 000 and another holds less?

3. Will the levy be applied to deposits totalling over EUR 100 000 held by the same person both in Cyprus and elsewhere? If so, how will the levy be applied if one account holds more than EUR 100 000 and another holds less?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The measure to which the Cypriot authorities committed itself during the meeting of the Eurogroup on 25 March 2013 does not contain any provision for a levy upon bank deposits. The Cypriot authorities committed itself to recapitalisation of that Bank of Cyprus through a deposit/equity conversion of uninsured deposits with full contribution of equity shareholders and bond holders whilst Cyprus Popular Bank would be resolved with full contribution of equity shareholders, bond holders and uninsured depositors. The deposit/equity conversion will only be applied on deposits within Bank of Cyprus of more than EUR 100 000 that are not eligible for set-off. If a depositor holds two or more accounts, their contribution towards the deposit/equity conversion will be taken firstly from the deposit with the longest maturity and, if equal maturities, from the deposit with the highest balance.

The modalities of the resolution are laid out in the relevant decree by the Central Bank of Cyprus ([1]).

([1]) http//www.centralbank.gov.cy/nqcontent.cfm-id=12631

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003828/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Criação de um Banco de Desenvolvimento por parte dos BRICS

Tendo em conta o seguinte:

— Os BRICS (Brasil, Rússia, Índia, China e África do Sul) têm vindo a aprofundar o seu desenvolvimento económico e social, assumindo uma posição na economia global cada vez mais relevante e com maior preponderância nas transações internacionais;

— Este conjunto de países tem tentado conquistar mais poder em entidades como o Fundo Monetário Internacional ou o Banco Mundial, mas tem sofrido uma grande resistência das nações mais desenvolvidas, onde se incluem alguns países europeus;

— Perante os vários bloqueios levantados a um maior equilíbrio geopolítico, os BRICS poderão criar um Banco de Desenvolvimento, que poderá servir como uma espécie de Banco Mundial para o mundo emergente;

— Segundo Jim O'Neill, responsável do Goldman Sachs, o anúncio da criação de um banco próprio por parte dos BRICS é importante por várias razões: mostra que, como grupo, podem alcançar algo, que muitas outras medidas poderão ser adotadas no futuro e, ainda, que estes países terão o seu Banco Mundial específico;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como avalia a criação de um possível Banco de Desenvolvimento dinamizado pelos BRICS?

2. Poderá o Banco Europeu de Investimento participar ativamente na criação deste novo Banco de Desenvolvimento?

3. Como se poderá aprofundar a crescente relação económica entre o BEI e o novo Banco de Desenvolvimento?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(31 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão acolhe favoravelmente a ideia e os esforços desenvolvidos para mobilizar financiamento adicional para o desenvolvimento e acompanhará de perto as próximas etapas.

2. A iniciativa de criar um banco de desenvolvimento por parte dos BRICS ([1]) está ainda numa fase inicial, estando ainda pendentes decisões a nível político.

3. O Banco Europeu de Investimento (BEI) assegura a cooperação e a coordenação com bancos regionais e multilaterais de desenvolvimento. Relativamente ao caso específico do banco de desenvolvimento BRICS, a Comissão considera que é demasiado prematuro para se pronunciar.

([1]) Países BRICS (Brasil, Rússia, Índia, China e África do Sul).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003828/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Creation of a development bank by the BRICS countries

The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have been furthering their economic and social development, becoming increasingly important in the world economy and accounting for a growing share of international transactions.

This group of countries has been trying to gain greater power in bodies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, but has faced significant resistance from the most developed countries, including several Member States.

Given the various obstacles to greater geopolitical balance, the BRICS countries are in a position to set up a development bank to serve as a sort of World Bank for the emerging economies.

According to Jim O'Neill, chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, the announcement that the BRICS countries are to set up their own bank is important because it shows that they can achieve something as a group, that they could take many other steps in future, and that these countries will have their own World Bank.

1. What is the Commission's view of the potential creation of a development bank led by the BRICS countries?

2. Will the European Investment Bank (EIB) play an active part in setting up this new development bank?

3. How can the budding economic relationship between the EIB and the new development bank be further developed?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

1. The Commission welcomes the idea and efforts towards mobilising additional financing for development and will follow the next steps closely.

2. The initiative to setup a BRICS ([1]) development bank is still at an initial stage with decisions pending at political level.

3. The European Investment Bank (EIB) cooperates and coordinates with regional and multilateral development banks. For the specific case of the BRICS development bank it is too premature to judge.

([1]) BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003830/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Restoration and improvement of grounds near a historic site

Could the Commission indicate what current EU funding programmes, if any, would be of relevance to support the restoration and improvement of the area around a medieval round tower in Dublin and the construction of a nearby museum, and indicate when the next call for proposals for these programmes will be made?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes in Ireland typically focus on niche investment opportunities in the areas of Research and Technological Development and small business support through the country-wide network of City/County Enterprise Boards.

During the 2007-2013 period , the two ERDF 2007-2013 programmes for (1) Border, Midland and Western region and (2) Southern and Eastern region have invested in a limited number of sustainable urban development projects. No further 2007-2013 funding is, however, available under this urban development strand of activity.

Ways of encouraging urban development under the prospective 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment funding streams will be considered during future negotiations with the relevant national and regional authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003831/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Review of EU legislation on VAT reduced rates

What is the current situation with regard to the follow-up to the Commission's public consultation on the review of existing EU legislation on VAT reduced rates, which ran from 8 October 2012 to 1 January 2013?

What action is the Commission now considering on this issue, and as a follow-up to its 2011 Communication on the future of VAT (COM(2011)0851)?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

On 8 October 2012 the Commission launched a public consultation on the review of existing legislation on reduced VAT rates ([1]). The aim was to gather feedback from relevant stakeholders as regards the three guiding principles for the review which are set out in the communication on the future of VAT ([2]). The Commission received a total of 333 contributions. A report summarising the outcome of the consultation, along with the submissions, has already been published and is available from the Commission's website ([3]).

This consultation is part of the overall assessment process launched in 2012 which is still ongoing. It will feed into the preparation of a new proposal on VAT rates.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/consultations/tax/2012_vat_rates_en.htm
([2]) COM(2011) 851 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/consultations/tax/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003832/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Transition from education and training to work

How has the Commission responded to Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on an Agenda for new skills and jobs ([1]), most notably to paragraph 42, which called on it (and the Member States) to 'reinforce an evidence-based policy exchange on the transition from education and training to work and on learning mobility, which contribute to the development of the skills and the employability of young people'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

In the wake of the Resolution, the Commission proposed new benchmarks as a means to stimulate policy exchanges and better policy efforts to address employability of graduates from education and learning mobility. In the Council Conclusions of November 2011, Member States agreed upon a benchmark for learning mobility and in May 2012 upon a benchmark on the employability of graduates.

The annual Education and Training Monitor and the Joint Report on the implementation of the 'ET2020' strategic framework enable the Commission to monitor progress towards achieving the European mobility and employability benchmarks. The Education and Training Monitor is an analytical tool that provides the empirical evidence to underpin the Europe 2020 reform agenda. Recent figures on graduate employability and learning mobility on VET and tertiary level can be found in its annex. In addition, efforts are made to enhance policy exchanges between Member States with regular peer reviews and the exchange of good practice.

Furthermore, the Commission Communication 'Rethinking Education' which was adopted in November 2012 identified as strategic priorities to be addressed by Member States: vocational education and training, work based learning, partnerships between public and private institutions and learning mobility.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0466.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003833/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Remuneration of company managers

What plans does the Commission have to come forward with proposals by the end of 2013 to give shareholders a greater say on pay and to provide for greater transparency as regards managers' remuneration?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission is currently in the process of preparing evidence on the advantages and disadvantages of the various policy options by assessing their potential impact, with the aim of proposing an initiative in 2013, possibly through a modification of the shareholders' rights Directive. For a general overview of the initiatives in this area, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-2536/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003834/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Recognition of professional experience obtained in Abu Dhabi

Further to the Commission's answers to Written Questions E-4889/2006, E-4910/2006 and E-2755/2006 on the recognition of professional experience and seniority gained by public servants in other EU Member States, I have received correspondence on behalf of an Irish constituent who is facing difficulties in getting her teaching service in Abu Dhabi recognised in relation to her possible retirement. This constituent started her teaching career in 1979 and spent some time working as a teacher in an accredited international school in Abu Dhabi. On her return, the Department of Education in Ireland recognised four of those years for incremental purposes but is refusing to recognise them as years of service for pension purposes.

Could the Commission indicate whether EC law on the recognition of professional experience would have a bearing in this particular case, and what remedies are available to this EU citizen under EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The recognition of professional qualifications in the European Union, including professional experience, is governed by Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) ('the directive'). The directive applies to citizens of a Member State wishing to provide services or establish themselves in a Member State other than the one where the professional qualifications have been acquired. The directive does not, however, directly cover the recognition of professional qualifications obtained outside the European Union. For the purpose of exercising a profession, Article 2(2) of the directive grants Member States the possibility to recognise qualifications in accordance with their national legislation. The extent of such recognition can be challenged in front of national courts on the basis of the applicable national law. The directive, however, does not deal with recognition for other purposes, such as for the calculation of pensionable years.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003836/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Implications of possible UK withdrawal from the EU

An EU citizen of British nationality living in Ireland has expressed concern to me about the impact of a possible UK decision to withdraw from the EU on EU citizens of British nationality living in Ireland and in other Member States.

In the Commission's view, if the UK were to decide to withdraw from the EU, would UK citizens, including those permanently resident in other Member States, lose their EU citizenship, or could arrangements be put in place to enable any UK citizen permanently resident in another Member State to 'retain' their EU citizenship, should they so wish?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

It is not the role of the Commission to express a position on questions related to a hypothetical withdrawal of a Member State from the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003837/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Volunteers under European Seniors Action Programme

How has the Commission responded to Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on an Agenda for new skills and jobs ([1]), most notably to paragraph 46, which called on it to 'promote opportunities for older volunteers, and to develop a Seniors Action Programme for the increasing number of very experienced senior citizens who are willing to volunteer, which might run in parallel with, and complement, the Youth in Action Programme, and furthermore to promote specific programmes for intergenerational volunteering and for mentoring'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-002659/2013 ([2]) .

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0466.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003838/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: European study on social protection for care assistants

How has the Commission responded to Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on an Agenda for new skills and jobs ([1]), most notably to paragraph 59, which called on it to 'initiate a study on care assistants employed in clients' homes, in addition to other appropriate and sustainable solutions which support independent living, in order to establish whether EU legislation provides sufficient social protection for this category of workers which are often women'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

In the context of the Employment Package of 18 April 2012 ([2]) and in particular the Staff Working Documents on 'Exploiting the employment potential of the personal and household services' ([3]) the Commission gathered interesting data on the working condition of workers taking care of elderly people. The Commission also launched a public consultation (spring 2012) and organised a conference (January 2013) on personal and household services as a follow up to the Staff Working Document. During this conference a specific session was dedicated on 'working conditions and standards'.

A call for proposal on skills and restructuring will be launched before the summer 2013 with a specific part on personal and household services. This could be an opportunity to gather more information on care assistants employed in clients' homes. According to the results of this call, the Commission will decide whether further research and analysis is necessary.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0466.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 final.
([3]) SWD(2012) 95 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003839/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: European Sector Councils for Employment and Skills

How has the Commission responded to Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on an Agenda for new skills and jobs ([1]), and most notably to its paragraph 24, which called on it to 'promote the establishment of European Sector Councils for Employment and Skills within the context of the "Agenda for New Skills and Jobs", which should be upheld as a platform for collection and exchange of information held by Member States and regions in order to help coordinate the efforts of all parties concerned, as well as a tool to support social dialogue activities'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission has followed up on the Agenda for new skills and jobs and the European Parliament's 2011 resolution on this topic by proposing in 2012 packages of actions under the Employment Package, the Youth Employment Package and the Rethinking Education communication. The establishment of European Sector Skills Councils is one of the key Commission initiatives for developing labour market intelligence and stimulating the demand side of the labour market.

A total of 14 sectors have so far received funding for exploratory studies on establishing European Sector Skills Councils under two successive Calls for Proposals under the Progress Programme in 2011 and 2012. Out of the 14 sectors financed, 2 sectors (Commerce and Textile, Leather and Clothing) have set up European Sector Skill Councils and are thus currently in Phase 2 of the project. A new Call for Proposals to be published in mid-2013 will finance the establishment of new Sector Skills Councils. The aim of these Councils is to improve anticipation of labour market needs at sector level, producing operational analysis to better align the labour supply, particularly vocational education and training to the skills in demand on the labour market.

Complementary, Erasmus for All ([2]) will support European alliances: a) Knowledge Alliances to stimulate the sharing of knowledge between higher education institutions and enterprises, and create new multidisciplinary curricula for skills such as entrepreneurship, problem solving and creative thinking; and b) Sector Skills Alliances, uniting vocational institutions and organisations within an industry ([3]), to design and deliver joint vocational curricula and methods providing vocational learners with labour-market relevant skills.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0466.
([2]) Erasmus for All: The EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport, COM(2011)787 final.
([3]) According to NACE codes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003840/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Directive 2010/41/EU

Which Member States have yet to inform the Commission of their transposition into domestic law of Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC, which should have been transposed by 5 August 2012?

What reasons have been given by Member States which have yet to transpose this legislation?

What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, to ensure the full transposition of this legislation by all Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

All Member States have informed the Commission of their transposition of Directive 2010/41/EU. Four Member States (Ireland, France, Slovenia and the United Kingdom) have requested the additional period mentioned in Article 16(2) to comply with Articles 7 and 8. That additional time period expires on 5 August 2014.

For reasons of efficiency and in order to monitor all Member States comprehensively, the Commission services start their detailed assessment of the correct transposition of this directive in Member States at the expiry of this additional time period. As with all monitoring of the implementation of Directives, any questions about the proper implementation of this directive will be addressed to Member States. If the Commission considers that the directive has not been properly implemented it may institute infraction proceedings. If the Honourable would like more details of the national transposition measures they can be found on the Eur-Lex website ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:72010L0041:EN:NOT .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003841/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Agroforestry

How is the Commission responding to the European Parliament's resolution of 20 April 2012 on the review of the 6th environmental action programme and the setting of priorities for the 7th environmental action programme ([1]), most notably to paragraph 42, which recommends placing a stronger focus on forests in the new Common Agricultural Policy by promoting agroforestry and a rural development policy based on sustainable landscapes?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission recognises the important role the agro-forestry measure has as part of the Rural Development Policy. Therefore, the Commission has proposed to continue and widen the scope of the agro-forestry measure during the next Programming period of Rural Development. As proposed by the Commission, the Member States would have at their disposal a specific measure for the agro-forestry systems as defined in Article 24 of the proposed Regulation. However, it depends on each Member State/region whether they decide to include this particular measure in their Rural Development Programme.

According to the Commission proposal, the support would cover the costs of establishment and an annual premium per hectare to cover the costs of maintenance for a limited period. The Member States, taking account of local pedo-climatic conditions, forestry species and the need to ensure agricultural use of the land, shall determine the maximum number of trees that are grown in combination with agriculture on the same land. The Member States would be in position of targeting measures to endangered agroforestry systems.

Moreover, the management of the traditional agroforestry ecosystems, commonly called 'sylvopastoralism' such as 'montado' or 'dehesas' could be supported under the agri-environment-climate measure. The support under this measure would be conditional to the respect of the reference level made of mandatory requirements. All the supported actions and commitments under this measure would be voluntary and must be set beyond such reference level.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0147.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003842/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: 2013-2020 EU occupational health and safety strategy

The European Parliament has stated that the 2013-2020 EU strategy for occupational health and safety should focus 'on using the potentials of REACH for improving workers' protection from chemical hazards, a renewed effort for preventing work-related illnesses and improving workers' quality of life at work, strengthening the monitoring and enforcement responsibilities of labour inspectorates and workers' participation in designing, monitoring and implementing prevention policies, improving the recognition of occupational diseases and addressing flexibility, insecurity, sub-contracting etc. as obstacles to proper risk prevention' (paragraph 106 of the European Parliament resolution of 15 December 2011 on the mid-term review of the European strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work (P7_TA(2011)0589)).

Will the Commission's evaluation report on the 2007-2012 health and safety strategy (carried out by COWI (from Denmark), Milieu (from Belgium) and the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM — from Great Britain)) be published before the end of June 2013?

What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's plans and preparations to promote the adoption of a new occupational health and safety strategy for 2013-2020, which the Commission's 2013 work programme indicates will be issued in July 2013?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission published the evaluation of the EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work 2007-2012 on 31 May, together with the report mentioned in the written question, which was prepared by an external contractor. On the same day the Commission launched an online consultation (running until 26 August) in order to ask the views of the stake holders how a new European framework on health and safety should be.

On the basis of the above evaluation and the results of the online consultation, the Commission will consider the way forward, including the possible adoption 2013 of a communication on Health and Safety at Work, which would lay down the main lines for policy intervention in this field.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003843/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Compliance with the Transfer of Undertakings Directive and EC law

On 16 November 2000, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) signed a contract with Premier FireServe Limited (PFS) and Premier FireServe Engineering (PFS Eng), both based in the UK. Since 17 January 2008, call centre, human resources, finance and IT services under this contract have been provided by Assetco Managed Services ROI Limited, based in Lisfannon, Buncrana, County Donegal, Republic of Ireland.

Citing breach of contract, in November 2012 the LFEPA exercised its right to terminate the contract with PFS and PFS Eng and to appoint a new provider. It appointed Babcock Critical Services Limited (Babcock), based in London, to maintain the fleet for a period of 18 months. Prior to the actual date of termination, Babcock issued a 'Project Red' document to the LFEPA, identifying the services being provided in the Republic of Ireland and stating how it intended to provide these services in the UK.

Under the UK legislation transposing the Transfer of Undertakings Directive (2001/23/EC), the UK-based employees of PFS and PFS Eng were transferred to Babcock. However, the rights of the Republic of Ireland-based workers have not been similarly transferred, leaving the financial burden of the redundancy of, and unpaid wages and other monies due to, these employees to be borne by the Irish Government.

Could the Commission outline how the Transfer of Undertakings Directive would apply in this case, and indicate what possible remedies are open to former, Donegal-based workers under the directive and other relevant EC law?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Directive 2001/23/EC ([1]) is intended to ensure continuity of employment relationships existing within an economic entity, irrespective of any change of ownership. According to ECJ case law, the transfer must relate to a stable economic entity whose activity is not limited to performing one specific work contract and which maintains its identity following the change of employer. The term economic entity refers to an organised grouping of persons and assets facilitating the exercise of an economic activity which pursues a specific objective. In order to determine whether the conditions for the transfer of an economic entity are met, it is necessary to consider all the facts characterising the transaction in question. However, all those facts are merely single factors in the overall assessment and cannot be considered in isolation.

It is for the national authorities, including the courts, to apply the national provisions transposing the aforementioned Directive in each particular case. In particular, the national authorities will have to determine whether there is a 'transfer', which was the 'economic entity' transferred, and whether this entity maintained its identity, taking into account all pertinent facts. Consequently, the Commission is not able to conclude whether the directive applies to the Donegal-based workers and whether there was really a change of employer with regard to them.

([1]) Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses, OJ L 82, 22.3.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003844/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Commission initiatives to support the fashion sector

The European fashion sector accounts for approximately 3% of EU GDP and 10% of EU exports, and employs five million people. What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's plans to establish a 'match-making platform' for creating partnerships between designers, small producers and SMEs across the European Union, as is currently being attempted through the 'Worth' pilot project?

How does the Commission propose to strengthen the capacity of education and training institutes in order to provide students with the skills needed in the fashion sector?

In its efforts to promote the European fashion sector, how will it ensure that decent employment conditions are promoted across the EU and in third countries?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Regarding the Worth Pilot Project, the call for tender for establishing a transnational platform for partnerships between designers and SMEs that was planned for Q2/2013 was published on 30 April in the OJEU. The objective of the Worth Pilot Project is to offer to manufacturing SMEs the opportunity to attract and capture knowledge and competences such as design and other technical skills.

In the new education and training programme ([1]), Erasmus for All, a new type of grants is envisaged, which will contribute to strengthening the capacity of education and training institutes to provide vocational students with the skills needed, notably in the fashion sector. Sector Skills Alliances will be transnational projects between vocational education and training providers and labour market stakeholders from the same economic sector as well as authorities or bodies responsible for curricula, certification/qualification or professional orientation.

Recognising that responsible business behaviour is important for the sector, the Commission offered ([2]) the possibility to create corporate social responsibility ([3]) platforms and invited stakeholders to develop a Code of good practices, in full compliance with competition rules. The Commission favours the voluntary nature of CSR-related initiatives and better aligning of European and global approaches by the OECD, UN, ILO and ISO. Besides occupational health and safety regulatory requirements, CSR is expected to contribute to create, improve and promote better employment conditions worldwide.

([1]) 2014-2020.
([2]) SWD(2012) 284 final/2.
([3]) CSR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003845/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Social costs of spending cuts and addressing Europe's skills shortages

How has the Commission responded to the European Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on an agenda for new skills and jobs ([1]), most notably to paragraph 6, which urged it (and the Member States) 'to assess the social costs of spending cuts, in particular of those for education and active labour market policies which could jeopardise progress in addressing the shortage of skilled workers in Europe and maintaining economic performance'?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission pointed out recently to '(…) increasing levels of skills mismatch in the EU' ([2]). Countries with higher skill mismatches tend to have lower levels of public investment in education and training, spend less on active labour market policy measures and have higher labour market segmentation. It highlighted that fiscal tightening has affected employment through both direct (public sector employment) and indirect (aggregate demand) channels ([3]).

The Employment Package ([4]) presented measures in such areas as job creation, investment in skills and completion of the EU labour market. The Commission launched a range of initiatives focusing on skills: the EU Skills Panorama ([5]), European Sector Skills Councils, the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations taxonomy to enhance the recognition across borders, the European Skills Passport ([6]), the European Qualifications Framework ([7]), and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs ([8]). In the Youth Employment Package ([9]), the Commission proposed the Youth Guarantee. The recently presented Social Investment Package ([10]) set out a framework for policy reforms to invest in people's skills and capabilities.

Rethinking Education ([11]) and the Education and Training Monitor 2012 ([12]) provided evidence on the costs and benefits of investing in education and training for better skills and invited Member States and social partners to engage in national debates on efficiency of funding for education and training whilst ensuring equity.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0466.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7315.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7482.
([4]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([5]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu/.
([6]) http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/european-skills-passport.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/eqf_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0.
([9]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5 December 2012.
([10]) COM(2013) 144 of 12 March 2013.
([11]) COM(2012) 669 final of 20 November 2012.
([12]) SWD (2012) 373 final of 20 November 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003847/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Standardised cigarette packaging as a smoking deterrent

On 27 March 2013 the Scottish Government introduced a strategy towards becoming a tobacco-free nation which includes plans for the introduction of standardised packaging of cigarette cartons.

Has the Commission identified a reasonable approach to introduce similar deterrent packaging across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

In its proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, the Commission proposed measures on labelling and packaging. These include mandatory pictorial health warnings covering the front and back of cigarette packages and roll your own tobacco, as well as health warnings on the sides of packages. The proposal foresees that promotional and misleading elements are prohibited, including references to flavours and positive properties such as 'vitalizing'. A certain standardisation of packs is foreseen, e.g. a pack of cigarettes should contain at least 20 cigarettes.

The proposal further foresees that Member States retain their power to regulate the area of the package not regulated by this directive or other Union legislation, including implementing provisions providing full standardisation of packaging, as far as these provisions do not impair the full application of the directive and are compatible with the Treaty and with WTO rules. Most rules apply to cigarettes and roll your own tobacco, with a possibility to extend the scope in case of a substantial increase in the use of other products among young people or a substantial increase in sale.

The proposal is an ambitious yet balanced effort to ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market, and to address the largest avoidable health threat in the EU — tobacco consumption — which is responsible for nearly 700 000 premature deaths in the EU every year. In terms of public health, the proposal aims at discouraging young people from taking up smoking — the Commission is concerned that 70% of smokers start smoking before age 18 and 94% below age 25. The provisions on labelling and packaging seek to ensure that information on the negative impact of tobacco products on health is better conveyed.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003848/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Long-term EU smoking policy

Following steps taken in Scotland that aim at having less than 5% of the population smoking by 2034, has the Commission considered a similar long-term strategy on an EU-wide basis?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

According to the impact assessment underpinning the Commission proposal for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]), the proposed measures would lead to a reduction of tobacco consumption of around 2% beyond the baseline for cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco within a five year period after transposition. This corresponds to a reduction of 2.4 million smokers in the EU.

The Commission follows with keen interest the developments in Member States and regions that aim at bringing down the number of smokers to a certain percentage of the population. The Commission is however not envisaging a long-term strategy on an EU-wide basis on this matter.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003849/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Knife-crime-related hospital admissions across the Member States

The Scottish Government recently announced a sharp fall in knife-crime-related hospital admissions (a decrease of 33.6% over a three-year period), which follows the success of a targeted 'No Knives, Better Lives' campaign seeking to educate young people on the devastation that carrying a weapon can cause to their own lives and to the lives of others. Additionally, Scotland's courts already impose the toughest knife crime sentences in the UK.

Is the Commission aware of similar, successful targeted schemes across the EU that have aimed to reduce knife-crime-related hospital admissions, and is there a trend of falling knife-crime-related hospital admissions across the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission acknowledges the successful 'No Knives, Better Lives' campaign to reduce knife crime in Scotland.

Knife crime prevention has been the focus of several other campaigns in the UK, as documented by a report by Brooke Kinsella, commissioned by the Home Secretary and published in February 2011, which provides details of 22 relevant projects.

The EU Crime Prevention Network, funded by the European Commission, includes tackling knife crime as a key focus, and best practice, mainly from the UK, has been shared with other Member States.

The Joint Action on Injury Monitoring in Europe (JAMIE) ([1]), funded under the EU-Health Programme (2008-2013), has recently released the report 'Injuries in the European Union: Summary of injury statistics for the years 2008-2010' ([2]). It includes a section 'Hotspot interpersonal violence' and says that sharp objects as knives are the most common means in homicides or 34% of incidences. Around 2% of all fatal injuries in the EU-27, or 4 600 cases annually, that have been recorded in the national cause of death registers are related to homicide.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20102205
See also the EU Injury Database: http://ec.europa.eu/health/data_collection/databases/idb/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/data_collection/docs/idb_report_2013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003850/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Fire-safe cigarettes and trends in fire occurrences

Scotland's nine fire and rescue service areas noted a drop of 19.8% in the occurrence of fires in Scotland for the periods 2006-2007 and 2010-2011. This drop is partly due to the introduction of reduced ignition propensity (RIP) cigarettes across the EU in 2011.

Has the Commission analysed similar reductions in reported fires across EU Member States? To what extent is there direct evidence linking any drops in the need to attend fires by fire and rescue services to fire-safe cigarettes?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission is currently collecting information from Member States about the number of cigarette related fires since the introduction of reduced ignition propensity (RIP) cigarettes in the EU in November 2011. First figures are available from Finland, which has seen a reduction of cigarette fire fatalities of up to 54% (see answer to Written Question E-010263/2012 ([1])). This corresponds to about 500 lives saved every year when extrapolated to the whole of the EU.

The Commission does not have at this stage direct evidence linking the introduction of RIP cigarettes to a reduction of cigarette fires and related fatalities. As already outlined in the answer referred to above, there can be confounding factors.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003851/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Financial transfers from the UK to the rest of the EU

The cost of making small transfers of money from the UK to the rest of the EU is relatively uniform among UK banking institutions. The fixed-cost fees are substantial in comparison with the size of the transfers being made. Some of my constituents in Scotland have questioned whether there is true competition in this area of the financial market.

— Has the Commission looked at competition in this area of the financial market, or does it intend to do so in the future?

— What actions will the Commission take to encourage lower money transfer fees in order to help increase financial cohesion and trade across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the price developments in the UK and is in contact regarding this matter with the UK competition authority and with the newly established UK Financial Conduct Authority. In the case of bank charges, the market for the relevant market is national, not EU-wide and the UK authorities are best placed to conduct the necessary research into their own market. In addition, the EU competition rules would not be triggered as long as the UK banks do not collude on bank charges and there is no abuse of a dominant position in the banking market. At present the Commission has no indications of such breaches of EU competition law. Therefore, it appears that it would be for the national banking regulator, rather than for the European Commission, to directly address the issue.

2. Charges for cross-border payments in the EU are already, to a large extent, low. Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 on cross-border payments regulates charges for payments in euro and stipulates that charges for cross-border euro payments in the EU should be the same as charges for corresponding national payments in euro. The regulation may be further extended, by a decision of a non-euro Member State, to all national and cross-border payments involving both the euro and its national non-euro currency.

If the extension were to be applied by the UK, the banks would be obliged to charge the same fees for cross-border bank transfers in euro (or pounds) as for the purely national transfers in pounds. However, the UK decided not to use the opt-in possibility offered by the regulation which would have equalised charges for cross-border payments with charges for national payments. This decision allows UK banks to apply higher charges for cross-border payments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003852/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: European Space Programme and Scotland

What direct benefits and financial allocations does Scotland receive through the European Space Programme?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

Space related activities are mainly funded under the EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development and the specific programmes for satellite navigation (GNSS) — Galileo and EGNOS and for Earth observation — GMES/Copernicus.

Since Scotland is not a Member State and not explicitly identified in the FP7 statistics, it is not possible to extract data relating to direct financial benefits to Scottish entities and thus provide an exhaustive view of this. However, two specific examples can be given where Scottish entities participate in projects managed by the European GNSS Agency. The grants for these beneficiaries amount to EUR 482,278. The projects are: ACCEPTA ('Accelerating EGNOS Adoption in Aviation') and SafePort ('Safe Port Operations using EGNOS Safety-of-Life Service').

In terms of services, Member States have benefitted from EGNOS since it became operational in 2009. Thus, with a ranging and integrity monitoring station (RIMS) in Glasgow (financed under the programmes), a significant part of Scotland benefits from coverage of the EGNOS Safety Of Life service for aviation and, after a planned service update this summer, it is foreseen that the most northern areas will also be covered. Galileo will entail a global system, covering Scotland also.

Regarding GMES/Copernicus, recent studies have analysed the potential beneficial impact of Copernicus on both the GDP and the employment conditions across the EU as a whole. This Impact Analysis has been published on the Internet at http://copernicus.eu/pages-principales/library/study-reports/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003853/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Electricity costs

The cost of household electricity is of great concern to my constituents in Scotland. There is a perception across the UK that electricity companies do not react quickly when it comes to reducing prices but are quick to raise them.

— What actions has the Commission taken to ensure fair competition and pricing in the electricity market across the EU and within Scotland?

— Will the Commission undertake an investigation of the pricing adjustments by electricity companies in Scotland to see if they are treating consumers unfairly?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The EU Electricity Directive ([1]) provides for broad market opening and competition between suppliers of electricity to the benefit of all EU citizens, including in Scotland. The directive contains provisions which aims to ensure a high level of protection of energy consumers in the EU. The responsibility for the transposition and implementation of the directive lies with Member States, who according to the legislation need, *inter alia*, to set up national regulatory authorities. The tasks of these regulatory authorities include 'ensuring that consumers benefit through the efficient functioning of their national market, promoting effective competition and helping to ensure consumer protection' ([2]). In the UK, this competent national authority is Ofgem, which would need to cover the activities mentioned in the question of the Honourable Member.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity.
([2]) Article 36(g).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003854/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Economic growth in Scotland

What actions is the Commission taking, or planning, to help boost economic growth across the EU and which may be applicable in Scotland?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Policies to boost growth across the EU, directly or indirectly, benefit Scotland. Most prominent are the policies to complete the internal market, competition policy, trade policy as well as integrated economic surveillance and economic policy coordination under the Europe 2020 strategy. While the former policies are horizontal in nature, for the latter the Commission can refer the Honourable Member to the most recent UK-specific documents which are relevant for Scotland and can be found under the following links:

Overview:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/united-kingdom/index_en.htm

Documents for 2012:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/2012/index_en.htm

Most recent published analysis:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/macroeconomic_imbalance_procedure/index_en.htm

The Commission also implements EU cohesion policy. Information on programmes in the UK is available here:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/uk/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003855/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Direct flights between Brussels and Aberdeen

There are currently very few direct travel opportunities between Aberdeen in Scotland and Brussels. Aberdeen is the oil capital of Europe, and a greater number of direct connections to the capital of Europe would help to boost economic growth in both Scotland and the rest of Europe.

— What actions can the Commission take to help improve connections between Aberdeen and Brussels?

— What contribution will the Commission make to improving interconnections between Aberdeen and Brussels?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

In answer to the Honourable Member's question on direct flight opportunities between Brussels and Aberdeen, it is important to recall that the aviation sector's basic modus operandi is one which is governed by offer and demand. On the basis of the European Parliament and Council Regulation 1008/2008, the European Commission can not intervene to ensure that a route is flown between two cities.

It might well be that demand for such a direct connection between Brussels and Aberdeen is too small for a service to be profitable. However, Aberdeen is well connected with Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Paris, all of which offer regular direct rail services to Brussels (high speed from Frankfurt and Paris).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003856/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Commission analysis of the total cost of treating alcohol-related illnesses

Could the Commission provide an analysis of the total cost of treating alcohol-related illnesses per annum in the nations of Europe?

Could the Commission further investigate the statistics in order to identify the average cost of treating alcohol-related illnesses per annum in the nations of Europe, compared to total population figures per nation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

According to a report by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), the overall social costs related to the consumption of alcohol in the EU in 2010 have been estimated at EUR 155.8 billion, of which EUR 6.3 billion are attributable to the treatment of illnesses linked to alcohol abuse and the prevention of alcohol related harm. A large part of the overall costs are attributed to crime, losses in productivity and mortality ([1]).

The Commission is however not in a position to provide an analysis of yearly expenditure in the Member States linked to the treatment of alcohol related illness. Available data do not allow the calculation of the average cost for treatment of alcohol related diseases in each Member State.

([1]) J. Rehm (2012) Alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence and attributable burden of disease in Europe http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news_and_publications/reports_and_books/Documents/CAMH%20Alcohol%20Report%20Europe%202012.pdf Figure 16 at page 72

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003857/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Boosting recycling

Across the EU and across Scotland recycling rates differ, as well as the types and methods of recycling used.

What actions is the Commission taking to enable a boost in the effectiveness of recycling schemes across the EU and in Scotland?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

According to the latest statistics provided by Eurostat, the average recycling rate of municipal waste in the EU was 40% in 2011. The Commission is aware of the substantial disparities in the level of recycling amongst Member States and also in some cases within a Member State.

In line with the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe ([1]), the Commission is developing a number of actions to help Member States meet the 50% recycling target on household waste by 2020 as set out in Article 11 of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([2]). For instance, the Commission has recently assisted a first group of 10 Member States ([3]) lagging behind in waste management to perform better through a customised compliance-assistance programme ([4]) which promotes, *inter alia*, the use of economic instruments such as landfill taxes and pay-as-you-throw schemes. This action could be extended in the future to other Member States with significant distance to waste targets.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/pdf/com2011_571.pdf
([2]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.
([3]) Bulgaria, Czeck Republic, Estonia, Greece, Italy (Souther regions), Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003858/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Boosting employment in Scotland

Unemployment remains high across the EU and is of great concern to my constituents in Scotland. What specific actions is the Commission taking, or planning, which could be used to boost employment in Scotland?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Since many years, Scotland has benefited from the support of the European Social Fund (ESF) in the framework of fostering its employment. In the actual 2007-2013 programming period, Scotland receives ESF support to its Highlands & Islands Convergence Programme and to its Lowlands and Upland Competitive Programme. The total ESF support to the two running Scottish programmes is of EUR 320 million, targeting a boost of Scottish employment. In close cooperation between the Scottish authorities and the Commission services, the programmes have undergone modifications adjusting them to the recently arisen challenges. The preparation of the future 2014-2020 programming period is ongoing and the Commission is looking forward to working closely together with the Scottish authorities on the preparation and completion of ESF programmes which fully reflect the specific Scottish needs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003859/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Betting shops

My constituents have raised concerns regarding the increasing number of betting shops opening in Scotland. The betting shops seem to cluster in poorer areas, which only enhances inequalities within Scotland. Current UK regulations do not allow local communities to consider measures to limit the number of betting shops in a given area.

— Does the Commission have a role in regulating or advising on gambling within the EU?

— What actions or advice is the Commission considering to assist communities within Member States in considering measures to limit the number of betting shops?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

In the current situation, it is for the Member States, within the limits established by the Court of Justice of the EU, to determine the organisation of the gambling offer, including the objectives of their gambling policy and the level of protection sought. As regards authorisation of betting and gaming, including licenses or permits for betting shops, public authorities have a duty to comply with the fundamental rules of the Treaties (transparency, equal treatment).

The implementation of measures to protect consumers is also primarily the responsibility of national authorities. However, in its communication 'Towards a Comprehensive European Framework for Online Gambling' ([1]), the Commission recognises that effective enforcement by Member States of their national legislation is necessary for the attainment of the public interest objectives of their gambling policy. The Commission will also adopt two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of common protection of consumers of gambling services and gambling advertising which is socially responsible. The principles to be elaborated include age verification and player identification controls financial and temporal limit setting, warning signs and exclusion possibilities. Whilst the focus of the abovementioned actions is on online gambling, they may also be pertinent to offline gambling services.

Existing EU legislation seeks to protect the economic interest of consumers in general and vulnerable groups such as minors in particular. For example, Directive 2005/29/EC ([2]) (without prejudice to other EU and national rules on the conditions of establishment and authorisation regimes relating to gambling) bans a wide range of misleading or aggressive business practices.

([1]) COM(2012) 596 final.
([2]) Directive on Unfair Business-to-Consumer Commercial Practices OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003860/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: All-over bus advertising

Many of my constituents in Scotland have raised the issue of advertising on the side of buses and covering the windows, known as 'all-over bus advertising'. Whilst persons with good vision can see through the advertising from inside the bus, those with visual impairments struggle to see out of the buses. Disability groups in Scotland have raised concerns about this practice due to the difficulties this creates for those suffering from visual disabilities.

— Could the Commission advise whether 'all-over bus advertising' is used in EU Member States other than the UK?

— Is the Commission considering regulating, or taking some action on, the use of 'all-over bus advertising' in the interests of those with visual impairments?

— If so, what actions are being considered?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Regulating the physical display of advertising messages in the public space including public transport is a matter of competence of local or national authorities in the EU. The Commission does not gather data on the use of different physical advertising media in the Member States.

The Commission does not have any data either about the effects of 'all-over-bus' advertising on specific groups of public transport users. While the Commission recognises that this type of advertising may create barriers for users of public transport and especially for the visually impaired, it is currently not planning an initiative in this area

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003861/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Access to broadband

Access to broadband is essential for my constituents in Scotland. In many rural areas broadband connections remain poor.

What action is the Commission taking to facilitate improved broadband connections in Scotland?

Question for written answer E-003862/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: 3G and 4G coverage in Scotland and the EU

3G and 4G coverage varies widely across the land mass of Scotland, which creates great disparities between my constituents regarding their access to information and portable technology.

— What actions is the Commission taking to facilitate improved 3G and 4G coverage in Scotland?

— Will the Commission consider setting standards for coverage across the EU, and especially across Scotland, so that EU citizens can have equitable access to vital information technology?

Joint answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission fully agrees that broadband is essential, for Scots as for all Europeans, and has reinforced this in the Digital Agenda for Europe by setting ambitious targets for broadband coverage and take up. It is now working with the Member States to ensure effective implementation of these targets, to ensure broadband for all.

Improving broadband connections requires investment by both the private and public sector. The Commission's role in regard to private investment is to ensure there is a regulatory framework that encourages investment, and this it is pursuing with our draft recommendation on costing methodologies and non-discrimination. In addition, in March this year, the Commission proposed a draft Regulation which is expected to cut the cost of rolling out high speed Internet by 30%.

In areas where the private sector can see no business case to invest, and this may well apply to the remote and sparsely populated parts of Scotland, the Commission may support broadband investment through the European Structural and Investments Funds. The Commission also recently adopted revised guidelines on the application of the state aid rules in relation to the rapid deployment of broadband networks. The Commission has approved several aid schemes in the UK for this purpose, notably the Broadband Development UK (BDUK) scheme, which was approved in 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-003863/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Duitse subsidiemechanismen voor hernieuwbare energie

Op donderdag 4 april 2013 stelde de Nederlandse Autoriteit Consument en Markt (ACM) in een rondetafelgesprek over het Duitse energiebeleid in de Tweede Kamer dat het Duitse stimuleringsmechanisme voor duurzame energie-opwekking leidt tot een ontwrichting van de Nederlandse energiemarkt. Dit gebeurt volgens ACM op drie manieren:

— De export van het surplus aan Duitse stroom leidt tot verstoring van prikkels voor nieuwe investeringen in gascentrales.

— De hoge invoeding van (variabele) wind- en zonne-energie leidt tot schommelingen in de productie van elektriciteit als plotseling wind en/of zon afnemen. Hierdoor kan leveringszekerheid in het gedrang komen.

— Voor de sterke verplaatsing van elektriciteitsproductie in Duitsland van het Noorden naar het Zuiden wordt ondermeer gebruik gemaakt van het Nederlandse hoogspanningsnet. Dit legt beslag op de beschikbare interconnectiecapaciteit en verkleint de mogelijkheid voor import en export naar en vanuit de Nederlandse markt.

Als oplossing stelt ACM onder meer voor de Europese marktintegratie zo snel mogelijk te voltooien. In de Communicatie rond de Interne Energiemarkt van de Europese Commissie (voorgesteld op 15 november 2012) onderschrijft de Europese Commissie het belang van een geïntegreerde Europese energiemarkt en wordt een reeks concrete acties opgesomd om dit te ondersteunen. De Commissie zal onder meer richtsnoeren uitwerken inzake steunregelingen voor hernieuwbare energie en hervorming van die regelingen. Dit moet leiden tot samenhangende regelingen die hernieuwbare energie integreren over de grenzen van de lidstaten heen.

1. Wat is volgens de Commissie het effect van het Duitse stimuleringssysteem voor duurzame energie op de energiemarkt van Nederland en andere Europese lidstaten? Vindt de Commissie dat het Duitse stimuleringssysteem voor duurzame energie de Europese markt verstoort en een effect heeft op de concurrentiepositie van energieleveranciers in andere landen?

2. Zal de Europese mededingingsautoriteit stappen ondernemen tegen een mogelijk verstorend marktbeleid van de Duitse overheid?

3. Neemt de Commissie de recente nieuwsfeiten in acht bij het opstellen van de richtlijnen inzake steunregelingen voor hernieuwbare energie en hervorming van die regelingen (Internal Energy Market, COM(2012)0663, pagina 16)?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(24 mei 2013)

1. De Duitse steunregeling heeft gezorgd voor een sterke groei van het aandeel hernieuwbare energie in de opwekking van elektriciteit en heeft er dus toe bijgedragen dat Duitsland zijn eerste tussentijdse doelstelling van de richtlijn inzake hernieuwbare energie reeds vroeg heeft bereikt ([1]). Gezien de erg lage marginale kosten die aan hernieuwbare energie zijn verbonden, heeft het groeiende aandeel hernieuwbare energie, en dan met name wind- en zonne-energie, de groothandelsprijzen gedrukt. Voor zover markten onderling verbonden zijn, heeft dat op zijn beurt gevolgen voor de energieprijzen in andere landen. De Commissie is echter niet op de hoogte van een analyse waarin deze impact wordt berekend.

Het is belangrijk eraan te herinneren dat de energiemarkt in de meeste lidstaten afhankelijk is van verschillende vormen van directe of indirecte overheidsinterventie die stuk voor stuk gevolgen kunnen hebben voor de concurrentiepositie van energieleveranciers.

([1]) Duitsland had in 2010 een aandeel HEB van 11 % in het totale energie-eindgebruik. De eerste tussentijdse doelstelling voor 2011/2012 was 8,2 %. De uiteindelijke doelstelling voor 2020 bedraagt 18 %, zie COM(2013) 175 final.

2. De Commissie is van mening dat, hoewel steun voor hernieuwbare energie nog steeds gerechtvaardigd kan zijn, onder meer om diverse gevallen van aanhoudend marktfalen te corrigeren, Duitsland en andere lidstaten hun steunregelingen moeten herzien om ze marktgerichter en kosteneffectiever te maken. Voorts is de Commissie van oordeel dat de steunregelingen, gezien het groeiende aandeel hernieuwbare energie, dringend beter moeten worden geharmoniseerd op EU-niveau om verstoringen van de interne markt tot een minimum te beperken. Om die reden zal de Commissie medio 2013 richtsnoeren voor steunregelingen inzake hernieuwbare energie uitbrengen.

3. De Commissie hecht belang aan de gevolgen en interacties die hierboven zijn beschreven en houdt er bijgevolg rekening mee bij het opstellen van de richtsnoeren voor steunregelingen inzake hernieuwbare energie. De Commissie is eveneens de huidige richtsnoeren voor staatssteun voor milieubescherming aan het herzien om ervoor te zorgen dat staatssteun minder concurrentieverstorend werkt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003863/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: German subsidy schemes for renewable energy

On Thursday, 4 April 2013, during a round-table discussion of Germany's energy policy in the Netherlands House of Representatives, the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and the Market (ACM) asserted that Germany's subsidy scheme for sustainable energy generation was distorting the Dutch energy market. According to the ACM, it was doing so in three ways:

— Exports of surplus German electricity destroy incentives for new investment in gas-fired power stations.

— The high volume of feed-in of (variable) wind and solar power causes fluctuations in the production of electricity if the amount of wind and/or sunshine available suddenly declines. This may jeopardise security of supply.

— For the substantial relocation of electricity generation in Germany from the North to the South, use is being made, *inter alia*, of the Dutch high-tension grid. This makes demands on the available interconnection capacity and reduces the scope for imports and exports from and to the Dutch market.

As a solution, ACM proposes *inter alia* completing European market integration as quickly as possible. In its communication on the Internal Energy Market (presented on 15 November 2012), the Commission endorses the importance of an integrated European energy market and lists a series of practical measures in support of it. The Commission intends, *inter alia*, to draw up guidelines for aid schemes for renewable energy and reform of those schemes. This is intended to result in coherent rules which will integrate renewable energy across the borders of the Member States.

1. What impact does the Commission believe that Germany's sustainable energy subsidy system is having on the energy markets of the Netherlands and other EU Member States? Does the Commission consider that the German subsidy system for sustainable energy is distorting the European market and affecting the competitive position of energy suppliers in other countries?

2. Will the European competition authority take steps against a possibly distorting market policy being pursued by the German authorities?

3. Will the Commission take account of recent news in drawing up the guidelines for aid schemes for renewable energy and reform of those schemes (Internal Energy Market, COM(2012)0663, page 16)?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

1. The German support scheme has led to strong growth in the share of renewable energy in electricity generation and therefore contributed to Germany having already fulfilled its first interim target according to the Renewable Energy Directive ahead of time ([1]). Given their very low marginal costs, the growing share of renewable energy and especially wind and solar has driven down wholesale market prices. To the extent that markets are interconnected, this in turn has an effect on energy prices in other countries. The Commission is however not aware of any analysis quantifying this impact.

It is important to recall that in most Member States, the energy market has been and still is subject to various forms of direct or indirect forms of government interventions, all of which can have an impact on the competitive position of energy suppliers.

([1]) Germany had a RES share of 11% in final energy consumption in 2010; the first interim target envisaged for 2011/2012 was 8.2% whereas the final 2020 target is 18%, cf. COM(2013)175 final.

2. The Commission is of the opinion that, while support for renewable energy can be justified amongst other things to correct a number of market failures, Germany and other Member States need to reform their support schemes in order to make them more market-oriented and cost-effective. The Commission furthermore considers that with the growing share of renewables it becomes urgent to Europeanise to a greater extent support schemes to minimise distortions of the internal market. That is why the Commission will publish guidance on renewable energy support schemes mid 2013.

3. The impacts and interactions described above are of concern to the Commission and are being taken into account as the Commission prepares its guidance on renewable energy support schemes. Likewise, the Commission is reviewing the current Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection with a view to making support schemes less distortive.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003864/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Zhoršujúca sa kríza

Štvrťročné hodnotenie Európskej komisie – pokiaľ hovoríme o otázke zamestnanosti a sociálnej situácie v Európe – viedlo k zisteniu, že sociálna kríza v Európe sa stále zhoršuje. Navyše, podľa vedeckej štúdie z ostatného obdobia, existuje spojitosť medzi úspornými opatreniami a zvýšeným počtom samovrážd.

Je dôležité, aby európske inštitúcie napriek ekonomickej kríze vynakladali úsilie na zmiernenie tvrdej askézy vedúcej k zhoršovaniu životných podmienok miliónov Európanov. Akými konkrétnymi krokmi chce Komisia prispieť k rozbitiu začarovaného kruhu krízy, úsporných opatrení a nezamestnanosti?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(7. júna 2013)

Komisia si je vedomá problémov, ktoré spôsobuje súčasná hospodárska a finančná kríza, pokiaľ ide o chudobu a sociálnu súdržnosť a je plne odhodlaná zaistiť najzraniteľnejším skupinám spoločnosti podporu. Ďalšie informácie o stratégii Európa 2020: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/structural_reforms/europe_2020/index_en.htm

1. Spomedzi nedávno navrhnutých konkrétnych iniciatív možno uviesť Balík o investíciách do sociálnej oblasti z februára 2013, ktorý poskytuje členským štátom usmernenie o efektívnejších a účinnejších sociálnych politikách. Finančné zdroje EÚ budú nápomocné pri podporovaní politík sociálnych investícií prijatých členskými štátmi.

2. Pre ďalší viacročný finančný rámec Komisia navrhuje, aby sa aspoň 25 % kohéznych fondov pridelilo ESF ([1]) a aby sa rozpočet ESF zvýšil o 10 %. V každom členskom štáte by sa malo najmenej 20 % z celkových zdrojov ESF vyčleniť na tematický cieľ „podpora sociálneho začlenenia a boj proti chudobe“.

Pre ďalší viacročný finančný rámec prijala Európska rada vo februári 2013 rozhodnutie vyčleniť 6 miliárd EUR na Iniciatívu na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí (2014 – 2020) na podporu cieľov Balíka pre zamestnanosť mladých a najmä na vykonávanie iniciatívy Záruka pre mladých, v rámci ktorej sa členské štáty vyzývajú, aby zaistili, že mladí ľudia do veku 25 rokov budú dostávať kvalitné pracovné ponuky a budú mať prístup ku kontinuálnemu vzdelávaniu, učňovskej príprave alebo odbornej príprave do štyroch mesiacov, odkedy sa stanú nezamestnanými alebo ukončia formálne vzdelávanie.

([1]) Európsky sociálny fond.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003864/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: The worsening crisis

In relation to employment and the social situation in Europe, the European Commission's quarterly assessment produced the finding that Europe's social crisis continues to worsen. According to a recent scientific study, moreover, there is a link between cost-cutting measures and increases in the suicide rate.

It is important for European institutions, despite the economic crisis, to make efforts to mitigate the tough austerity measures that lead to deteriorating living standards for millions of Europeans. What concrete steps does the Commission intend to take to help break the vicious circle of crisis, cost-cutting and unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the challenges posed by the current economic and financial crisis in terms of poverty and social cohesion, and it is fully committed to ensuring adequate support for the most vulnerable groups of society. For more information on Europe 2020:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/structural_reforms/europe_2020/index_en.htm

1. Among concrete initiatives proposed recently are the Social Investment Package of February 2013 which gives guidance to Member States on more efficient and effective social policies. EU funds will be instrumental in supporting social investment policies taken by the Member States.

2. For the next multi-annual financial framework, the Commission proposes that at least 25% of cohesion funds be allocated to the ESF ([1]) and that the ESF's budget be increased by 10%. At least 20% of total ESF resources in each Member State shall be allocated to the thematic objective 'promoting social inclusion and combating poverty'.

For the next MFF and EC decision in February 2013 European Council decided to allocate a EUR 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative (2014-2020) to support the objectives of the Youth Employment Package and notably the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, which calls on Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

([1]) European Social Fund.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003865/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Násilnosti voči ženám v Kolumbii

V Kolumbii, rovnako ako v iných krajinách, ženy trpia v dôsledku násilia a diskriminácie vo všetkých oblastiach svojho života. Narastá počet prípadov domáceho i sexuálneho násilia páchaného na ženách. Hoci bol dosiahnutý pokrok, pokiaľ ide o formálne uznanie týchto zločinov, nedostatočné uplatňovanie noriem vedie k zhoršeniu násilia. Navyše, tamojší ozbrojený konflikt prehlbuje diskrimináciu a násilie, ktorému sú ženy dennodenne vystavené.

S ohľadom na danú ťažkú situáciu – akými možnosťami opatrení disponuje Komisia v snahe eliminovať násilné činy páchané na ženách v tejto krajine?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(1. júla 2013)

Dovoľujem si upriamiť pozornosť váženej pani poslankyne na odpoveď na predchádzajúcu písomnú otázku E-003811/2013, pán Romeva i Rueda ([1]). Tá poukazuje na to, že je nesmierne dôležité, aby bola téma problémov žien v ozbrojených konfliktoch uvedená v návrhu stratégie EÚ pre ľudské práva v Kolumbii a aby bola súčasťou aktivít EÚ v oblasti rozvojovej pomoci, ktoré podporujú ženské organizácie a obhajkyne ľudských práv.

Na všeobecnejšej úrovni je násilie voči ženám v Kolumbii v značnej miere dôsledkom tamojšieho prevládajúceho vnútorného ozbrojeného konfliktu, vylúčenia žien zo sociálneho a ekonomického života alebo ide o dôsledok sociálno-ekonomických rozdielov. Stratégia EÚ týkajúca sa jej angažovania v Kolumbii vychádza z predpokladu, že musí byť sprevádzaná snahou o mier a stabilitu. Mier a stabilita sú zároveň podmienkou pre uspokojivý a inkluzívny rozvoj, pričom násilné konflikty sú, naopak, považované za najväčšiu prekážku ľudského rozvoja v Kolumbii. Spolupráca EÚ v rámci nástroja rozvojovej spolupráce (DCI) v Kolumbii sa preto zameriava na poskytovanie nástrojov, ktoré môžu pomôcť dosiahnuť trvalo udržateľný mier, a na podporu úsilia o integrovaný rozvoj na miestnej a regionálnej úrovni vrátane mnohých aktivít súvisiacich s rodovými otázkami. V platnosti sú aj ďalšie nástroje politiky EÚ, ako napr. dohoda o obchode medzi EÚ a Kolumbiou/Peru.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003865/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Violence against women in Colombia

In Colombia, as in other countries, women suffer from violence and discrimination in all areas of their lives. The number of cases of domestic and sexual violence committed against women is increasing. Although there has been progress in the formal recognition of these crimes, shortcomings in the application of rules are leading to a worsening of the violence. In addition, the armed conflict exacerbates the discrimination and violence which women face on a daily basis.

In view of the difficult situation — what means does the Commission have at its disposal for the effort to end the violent acts committed against women in this country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(1 July 2013)

The Honourable Member's attention is referred to the reply given to previous Written Question E-003811/2013 by Mr Romeva i Rueda ([1]), referring to the prominence that the theme of women in armed conflict is given in the draft EU human rights strategy for Colombia, as well as to EU development aid actions in support of women's organisations and women human rights defenders.

On a more general level, violence against women in Colombia is to a significant extent a function of the prevalence of the internal armed conflict in Colombia, as well as of socioeconomic exclusion and disparities. The EU's strategy for its engagement with Colombia is based on the premise that fair, inclusive development is a condition for, and must go hand in hand with the pursuit of, peace and stability, and that conversely, violent conflict is the main impediment to human development in Colombia. EU cooperation under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) in Colombia therefore concentrates on providing tools for the pursuit of sustainable peace and on fostering integrated development efforts at local and regional level, including a number of activities with a gender focus. Other tools of EU policy, including the Trade Agreement between the EU and Colombia/Peru, have the same finality.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003866/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Bahrajn hnaný k zodpovednosti za brutalitu

Vzhľadom na situáciu v Bahrajne je mimoriadne naliehavé usilovať o nastolenie okamžitých opatrení namierených voči porušovaniu ľudských práv a zároveň je potrebné vynaložiť úsilie na prepustenie politických väzňov. Aktivisti za ľudské práva sú väznení, mnohým obyvateľom je odopieraný prístup k zdravotnej starostlivosti, zvyšuje sa policajná brutalita voči študentom či demonštrantom.

Je opodstatnené a dôležité, aby v danej situácii i OSN naliehala na bahrajnskú vládu v snahe dospieť k ukončeniu násilností v krajine. Akým spôsobom sa o stabilizáciu vyhrotenej situácie vie pričiniť tiež Komisia?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

PK/VP pozorne sleduje celkovú situáciu v Bahrajne. Svedčia o tom početné vyhlásenia, závery Rady a mnohé kontakty s Bahrajnom, a to aj na najvyššej úrovni, ako aj vysielanie vysokopostavených úradníkov ESVČ do Bahrajnského kráľovstva zo sídla ESVČ aj z delegácie Únie v Rijáde, ktorá je oficiálne akreditovaná pre Bahrajn.

PK/HV aj naďalej využíva všetky dostupné diplomatické nástroje na vyjadrenie svojich stanovísk. Predovšetkým nabáda všetky strany, aby nevyvolávali násilie, jasne odmietali všetky formy násilia a úplne vykonali odporúčania bahrajnskej nezávislej vyšetrovacej komisie. PK/VK okrem toho pri viacerých príležitostiach pripomenula, že Európska únia je pripravená poskytnúť pomoc v záujme dosiahnutia skutočného národného zmierenia a zabezpečenia lepšej ochrany ľudských práv a základných slobôd, pokiaľ o to Bahrajn požiada. Ak má byť takáto pomoc užitočná, musia ju prijať všetky strany v krajine. EÚ v súčasnosti zavádza program financovaný pomocou nástroja stability, ktorý je zameraný na odbornú prípravu sudcov a prokurátorov v oblasti niektorých ľudských práv.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003866/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Making Bahrain responsible for the brutality

With regard to the situation in Bahrain, it is extremely urgent to push for the adoption of immediate measures to tackle human rights violations, and efforts must also be made for the release of political prisoners. Human rights activists are imprisoned, many people are denied access to healthcare, and police brutality against students and demonstrators is rising.

In the given situation, it is both justified and important for the UN to urge the Bahrain Government to make efforts towards ending the violence in the country. How does the Commission intend to contribute towards stabilising the tense situation?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The HR/VP is closely following the overall situation in Bahrain. The numerous statements, Council Conclusions, and the many contacts with Bahrain, also at the highest level, bear witness of this, as does the dispatching of top-ranking EEAS officials to the Kingdom, both from the Headquarters and the EU Delegation in Riyadh, officially accredited to Bahrain.

The HR/VP continues to use all available diplomatic tools to express her views, notably calling all sides to refrain from inciting violence and to reject it unequivocally in all its forms and to fully implement the recommendations of the Bahraini Independent Commission of Inquiry. She has also reminded, on several occasions, that the European Union stands ready to provide support to achieve genuine national reconciliation and to ensure better protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms this process, if, as and when requested by Bahrain. For such support to be useful, it must be accepted by all sides in the country. For the moment, the EU is establishing a programme, funded via the Instrument for Stability to address training of judges and prosecutors on certain human rights issues.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003867/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Pokrok krajín pri obnoviteľných zdrojoch

Európska komisia prijala správu o pokroku členských štátov pri dosahovaní cieľov do roku 2020 v oblasti energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov. Väčšina krajín vrátane Slovenska splnila svoje záväzky a ciele, avšak výhľad na splnenie cieľov Komisia nevidí príliš optimisticky.

Zástupcovia Komisie však zároveň uviedli, že je predovšetkým potrebné vytvoriť pre investorov atmosféru dôvery a istoty, znížiť administratívnu záťaž a zvýšiť prehľadnosť v plánovaní. Akými konkrétnymi krokmi či opatreniami sa chce Komisia pričiniť o dosiahnutie tohto cieľa?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(21. mája 2013)

S cieľom vytvoriť väčšiu istotu a stabilitu, pokiaľ ide o rámcové podmienky pre energiu z obnoviteľných zdrojov, Komisia zamýšľa prijať usmernenia o najlepších postupoch pri vytváraní a reforme schém na podporu energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov. Tieto usmernenia sa majú opierať o najlepšie postupy členských štátov a určovať, aké konkrétne kroky má členský štát podniknúť, aby vypracoval nákladovo účinnú schému na podporu energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov, ktorá mu umožní dosahovať záväzné ciele do roku 2020. Komisia takisto zamýšľa poskytnúť odporúčania týkajúce sa reformného procesu podporných schém, aby boli viac trhovo orientované a aby postupne znižovali úrovne podpory. Komisia najmä zastáva pevné stanovisko, že v dobre riadenom reformnom procese sa treba vyhýbať retroaktívnym zmenám podporných schém.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003867/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Progress of countries in renewable sources

The European Commission has adopted the Renewable energy progress report on Member States' progress towards achieving the 2020 targets. Most countries, including Slovakia, met their commitments and targets, but the outlook does not look very promising in terms of the Commission fulfilling its targets.

The Commission's representatives have, at the same time, stated that above all, it is necessary to create an atmosphere of trust and confidence for investors, to reduce the administrative burden and increase transparency in planning. What specific steps or measures does the Commission intend to take in order to achieve this target?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

In order to create more certainty and stability as regards the framework conditions for renewable energy, the Commission intends to adopt guidance on best practice for renewable energy support scheme design and reform. The intention is to base this on best practice from Member States and indicate what concrete steps a Member State should follow to design a cost-efficient support scheme for renewable energy that also allows it to attain the binding 2020 targets. The Commission also intends to give recommendations for the process of reforming support schemes with a view to making them more market oriented and gradually reducing support levels. Notably, the Commission holds the firm view that in a well-managed reform process retroactive changes to support schemes need to be avoided.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003868/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Nebezpečné demontáže lodí v rozvojových krajinách

Podľa Výboru pre životné prostredie by sa demontáže, šrotovanie a recyklácie starých lodí Únie mali robiť len v Úniou schválených zariadeniach, financovaných prostredníctvom recyklačného poplatku. Cieľom takýchto opatrení je zastaviť majiteľov porušujúcich a obchádzajúcich pravidlá EÚ, podľa ktorých je zakázaný vývoz nebezpečných odpadov do nečlenských krajín OECD.

Nedomnievajú sa zástupcovia Komisie, že účinným riešením by mohlo byť napríklad aplikovanie rôznych foriem finančných stimulov? Nebol by i toto vhodný spôsob, ako by lode mohli byť demontované v riadnych zariadeniach na recykláciu?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(16. mája 2013)

V marci roku 2012 komisári Potočnik a Kallas spoločne predložili návrh nového nariadenia o recyklácii lodí. V posúdení vplyvu, ktoré vypracovala Komisia, sa vysvetľuje, prečo možnosť vytvorenia fondu/poskytnutia finančných stimulov bola vylúčená už v počiatočnom štádiu ([1]).

Hlavným prvkom návrhu Komisie je umožniť demontáž lodí plaviacich sa pod vlajkami EÚ len vo vhodných recyklačných zariadeniach.

([1]) Posúdenie vplyvu, sprievodný dokument k návrhu nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o recyklácii lodí, SWD(2012) 47 final, s. 108 (pozri: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/ships//pdf/Impact%20Assessment.pdf)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003868/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Safe dismantling of boats in developing countries

According to the Environment Committee, the dismantling, scrapping and recycling of old EU ships should only be carried out in EU-authorised facilities that are funded through a recycling tax. These measures seek to prevent shipowners from violating and circumventing EU rules banning the export of hazardous waste to non-OECD countries.

Does the Commission not feel that applying various types of financial stimulus could be an effective solution? Would it not be appropriate for ships to be dismantled in proper recycling facilities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

In March 2012, Commissioners Potočnik and Kallas jointly presented a proposal for a new Regulation on Ship Recycling. The impact assessment of the Commission explains why the option of a fund / financial incentive was discarded at an early stage ([1]).

The main element of the Commission proposal is to allow the dismantling of ships flying EU flags only in appropriate recycling facilities.

([1]) Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on ship recycling, SWD(2012) 47 final, p. 108 (see: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/ships//pdf/Impact%20Assessment.pdf).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003869/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Jednoduchšie cestovanie v Európskej únii

V nadchádzajúcom období sa poslanci Európskeho parlamentu plánujú venovať okrem iného aj problematike cestovania v rámci členských štátov Únie. Posilnenie práv a bezpečnosti cestujúcich, zvýšenie kvality európskych letísk či väčšia hospodárska súťaž na železniciach – týmto a mnohým ďalším otázkam chcú poslanci a poslankyne Parlamentu venovať svoju pozornosť.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi sa chce Komisia pričiniť o to, aby bolo rôznymi druhmi dopravy uľahčené cestovanie v Európe i mimo nej?

Odpoveď pána Kallasa v mene Komisie
(15. mája 2013)

Biela kniha o doprave ([1]) načrtáva víziu Komisie o konkurencieschopnom dopravnom systéme efektívne využívajúcom zdroje, ktorý zachováva mobilitu a zároveň znižuje závislosť od ropy, ale aj emisie a preťaženie. Ústredným aspektom tejto stratégie je zlepšenie kvality osobnej dopravy s cieľom podporiť multimodalitu a použitie neindividuálnych dopravných prostriedkov.

Cieľom niektorých iniciatív Komisie je vyššia kvalita dopravy. Zopár aktuálnych príkladov je uvedených nižšie.

S cieľom posilniť práva cestujúcich Komisia plánuje zabezpečiť jednotný výklad právnych predpisov EÚ týkajúcich sa leteckej dopravy ([2]), ochrany cestujúcich v prípade platobnej neschopnosti leteckých spoločností ([3]), ako aj spoločných zásad vo všetkých druhoch dopravy ([4]). Cieľom budúcich iniciatív je zlepšenie informačných služieb o multimodálnom cestovaní a služieb plánovania.

Vzhľadom na dôležitú úlohu letísk v reťazci leteckej dopravy Komisia navrhla revíziu súčasných pravidiel upravujúcich prideľovanie prevádzkových intervalov na preplnených letiskách ([5]), čím by sa umožnilo lepšie využitie existujúcej kapacity letísk v EÚ a každý rok by tak mohlo pribudnúť až 24 miliónov cestujúcich. Revízia existujúcich pravidiel upravujúcich poskytovanie služieb pozemnej obsluhy ([6]) by navyše mala zlepšiť efektívnosť a kvalitu služieb na letiskách v EÚ.

Čo sa týka železničnej dopravy, Komisia prijala štvrtý železničný balík, ktorý obsahuje šesť legislatívnych návrhov. Tieto návrhy podporujú viac inovácií v oblasti železničnej dopravy v EÚ otváraním trhov vnútroštátnej osobnej dopravy v EÚ hospodárskej súťaži a poskytujú značné technické a štrukturálne reformy, ktoré budú súčasťou spomínaného otvorenia trhov ([7]). Tieto iniciatívy by mali pomôcť poskytovať lepšiu kvalitu a širší výber v rámci služieb železničnej dopravy v celej Európe.

([1]) Biela kniha – Plán jednotného európskeho dopravného priestoru – Vytvorenie konkurencieschopného dopravnému systému efektívne využívajúceho zdroje, KOM(2011) 0144 v konečnom znení.
([2]) Návrh na revíziu nariadenia 261/2004 o právach cestujúcich v leteckej doprave z marca 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 129 Ochrana cestujúcich v prípade platobnej neschopnosti leteckej spoločnosti.
([4]) KOM(2011) 898 Európska vízia pre cestujúcich: Oznámenie o právach cestujúcich vo všetkých druhoch dopravy.
([5]) Návrh nariadenia o spoločných pravidlách prideľovania prevádzkových intervalov na letiskách v EÚ z decembra 2011.
([6]) Návrh nariadenia o službách pozemnej obsluhy na letiskách v Únii a o zrušení smernice Rady 96/67/ES z decembra 2011.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003869/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Easier travel in the European Union

In the forthcoming period, MEPs are planning to address, among other things, the issue of travel within the framework of EU Member States. Strengthening passenger rights and safety, improving the quality of European airports and boosting competition on the railways are some of the many issues MEPs want to look into.

What specific steps does the Commission intend to take to facilitate travel by various forms of transport in Europe and beyond?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The White Paper on transport ([1]) sets out the Commission's vision for a competitive and resource-efficient transport system that preserves mobility while at the same time reduces oil dependency, emissions and congestion. A central aspect of this strategy is the improvement of the quality of passenger travel, with a view to boost multimodality and the use of non-individual transport means.

Several Commission initiatives are aimed at better quality travel and some recent examples are set out below.

In order to strengthen passengers' rights the Commission intends to ensure a uniform interpretation of EC laws in air transport ([2]), passenger protection in the event of airline insolvency ([3]) as well as common principles in all transport modes ([4]). Future initiatives also envisage improving multimodal travel information and planning services.

Considering the crucial role airports play in the aviation chain, the Commission has proposed a revision of the current rules governing allocation of slots at congested airports ([5]), which could allow a better use of the existing capacity at EU airports and up to 24 million addtitional passengers to be accomodated each year. In addition, a revision of the existing rules governing provision of groundhandling services ([6]) should improve the efficiency and quality of services at EU airports.

Regarding the railway transport, the Commission adopted the 4th Railway Package containing six legislative proposals. These encourage more innovation in EU railways by opening EU domestic passenger markets to competition and provide for substantial technical and structural reforms accompanying this market opening ([7]). These initiatives should help deliver better quality and a wider choice in railway services across Europe.

([1]) White Paper 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system', COM(2011)0144 final.
([2]) Proposal for revision of Regulation 261/2004 on air passenger rights, March 2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 129 'Passenger protection in the event of airline insolvency'.
([4]) COM(2011) 898 'European vision for Passengers: communication on Passenger Rights in all transport modes'.
([5]) Proposal for a regulation on common rules for the allocation of slots at European Union airports, December 2011.
([6]) Proposal for a regulation on groundhandling services at Union airports and repealing Council Directive 96/67/EC, December 2011.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/01/fourth-railway-package_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003870/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Európska občianska iniciatíva

Prvého apríla toho roku oslávila Európska občianska iniciatíva prvé výročie svojho vzniku. Počas uplynulých dvanástich mesiacov európski občania prostredníctvom tejto iniciatívy poukázali na rôzne problémy, napr. na otázky ochrany životného prostredia, zastavenia pokusov na zvieratách, poplatkov za mobilný telefón. Výnimkou nebola ani snaha o zníženie maximálnej povolenej rýchlosti v mestách na 30 km/h.

Samotný prínos Európskej občianskej iniciatívy spočíva predovšetkým v skutočnosti, že umožňuje občanom vyzvať Komisiu, aby sa ich podnetmi zaoberala. Môže byť Komisia i vďaka tejto platforme k občanom ešte bližšie? Ak áno, ako konkrétne?

Odpoveď pána Šefčoviča v mene Komisie
(15. mája 2013)

Vďaka iniciatíve občanov môžu občania priamo vyzvať Komisiu, aby predložila právne predpisy týkajúce sa oblastí, ktoré ich zajímajú. Iniciatíva umožňuje, aby boli ich názory vypočuté a aby sa daný problém stal súčasťou programu Komisie, čo posilní ich úlohu vo vytváraní politík EÚ.

Aj keď si Komisia zachováva svoje právo na predkladanie návrhov a preto nie je povinná prijať návrh, ktorý predložila iniciatíva občanov, vo všetkých prípadoch náležite zváži žiadosti predložené prostredníctvom iniciatívy občanov v súlade s postupom uvedeným v článku 10 a 11 nariadenia o iniciatíve občanov.

Komisia preto verí, že tento nástoj participovanej demokracie môže pozitívnym spôsobom prispieť k európskej demokracii a vytváraniu politiky EÚ a tým k zblíženiu Komisie a EÚ ako celku s občanmi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003870/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: European Citizens' Initiative

The European Citizens' Initiative celebrated its first anniversary on April 1 2013. During the past 12 months, European citizens have used the Initiative to raise various issues, such as environmental protection, halting experiments on animals and mobile telephone charges. There has also been an attempt to reduce the speed limit in towns to 30 km/h.

The actual benefit of the European Citizens' Initiative above all lies in the fact that it enables citizens to invite the Commission to deal with their initiatives. Can this platform help the Commission come even closer to citizens? If so, how?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Citizens' Initiative allows citizens to call directly on the Commission to bring forward new legislation on matters of interest to them. It offers citizens a way to make their voices heard and to put an item on the agenda of the Union, which reinforces their involvement in shaping EU policies.

Whilst the Commission retains its right of initiative and is therefore not bound to adopt a proposal following the submission of a citizens' initiative, it will in all cases give serious consideration to the requests made through citizens' initiatives in accordance with the procedure foreseen in Articles 10 and 11 of the regulation on the citizens' initiative.

The Commission therefore believes that this participatory democracy instrument can make a very positive contribution both to European democracy and to EU policy making and will thus contribute to bringing the Commission and the EU as a whole closer to citizens.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003871/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Záchrana cyperských bánk

Väčšina popredných predstaviteľov Európskeho parlamentu v uplynulých dňoch predostrela názor, že snaha o záchranu cyperských bánk by sa nemala odohrávať na úkor obyčajných ľudí. Taktiež, okrem iného sa lídri politických skupín kriticky vyjadrovali o „nedostatku transparentnosti a demokratickej zodpovednosti" v pôvodnom riešení navrhnutom ministrami eurozóny.

Môže sa i Komisia zasadiť za to, aby občania – sporitelia, ktorí vložia peniaze na bankové účty, mali istotu, že si ich z nich môžu opäť vybrať? Ako by bolo možné dosiahnuť, aby na snahu zachrániť cyperské banky nedoplácali práve občania?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(7. júna 2013)

Komisia opätovne potvrdzuje zásadu, že vklady v bankách v Európskej únii sú garantované až do výšky 100 000 EUR na účet v rámci jednej banky. Osobitné politické opatrenia, ktoré sa v súčasnosti vykonávajú na Cypre túto zásadu potvrdzujú. Len pri vyšších vkladoch (vyšších ako 100 000 EUR) sa požadovalo, aby ich majitelia prispeli na financovanie nedostatku kapitálu v dvoch hlavných bankách, Bank of Cyprus (Cyperská banka) a Cyprus Popular Bank (Cyperská ľudová banka). Prístup ku vkladom v iných bankách je obmedzený len dočasne a proporčne, vzhľadom na finančnú stabilitu v krajine. Kontroly kapitálu sú už voľnejšie a v súčasnosti sa uvažuje nad ich úplným ukončením v budúcnosti, vzhľadom na to, v Únii sa uznáva sloboda voľného pohybu kapitálu.

Nedostatok kapitálu dvoch hlavných bánk sa musel pokryť buď tak, že sa vyžadovalo financovanie od akcionárov banky, veriteľov a v krajnom prípade aj majiteľov najväčších vkladov, alebo tak, že by ho zaplatili daňoví poplatníci.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003871/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: The Cypriot bank rescue

In recent days, most of the European Parliament's senior representatives have advanced the view that efforts to save the Cypriot banks should not be at the expense of ordinary people. Political group leaders have also, among other things, criticised the 'lack of transparency and democratic accountability' in the original resolution proposed by euro area ministers.

Can the Commission back the principle that savers who deposit money in bank accounts should feel confident that they will be able to withdraw it later? How might it be possible to try and rescue the Cypriot banks without making the citizens pay?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission reaffirms the principle that deposits at banks in the Union are guaranteed up to EUR 100 000 per account with a single bank. The specific policy measures currently being implemented in Cyprus confirm this principle. Only large deposits, in excess of the limit of EUR 100 000, have been required to contribute to the funding of the capital shortfall at the two major banks, Bank of Cyprus and Cyprus Popular Bank. Access to deposits at other banks is restricted only temporarily and proportionally, due to considerations about financial stability in the country. The capital controls have been already loosened, and are of course meant to be fully removed in the future, in recognition of the freedom of capital in the Union.

The capital shortfall of the two major banks had to be funded either by requiring the bank's shareholders, creditors and, in this unique case, major deposit holders or by requiring the Cypriot taxpayers to pay.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003872/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Zjednodušený proces zaevidovania vozidla pri sťahovaní sa do iného členského štátu Únie

Na nemalé problémy s prevozom vozidla z jedného členského štátu do druhého sa sťažuje a poukazuje pomerne mnoho Európanov. V ostatnom čase sa poslanci a poslankyne venovali práve aj tejto problematike a výsledkom ich snáh by malo byť i akési zjednodušenie pravidiel v danej oblasti. Dochádzanie do práce v pohraničných oblastiach, nákup ojazdených áut v inej krajine Únie alebo strávenie polovice roka v letnej rezidencii s vlastným autom – to všetko by mohlo byť v budúcnosti menej náročné i podstatne menej finančne zaťažujúce.

V čom spočíva návrh Komisie v snahe zjednodušiť zaevidovanie áut pri sťahovaní sa v rámci členských štátov Európskej únie?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(30. mája 2013)

Komisia prijala 4. apríla 2012 návrh nariadenia, ktorým sa zjednodušuje prevoz motorových vozidiel už zaevidovaných v inom členskom štáte v rámci jednotného trhu ([1]).

V tomto návrhu sa stanovuje, že členský štát môže vyžadovať evidenciu vozidla už evidovaného v inom členskom štáte len v prípade, ak držiteľ osvedčenia o evidencii má svoj obvyklý pobyt na jeho území. Návrh tiež obsahuje ustanovenie, podľa ktorého v prípade, že držiteľ osvedčenia o evidencii zmení svoj obvyklý pobyt z jedného do druhého členského štátu, musí požiadať o evidenciu svojho vozidla v inom členskom štáte do šiestich mesiacov po svojom príchode.

Toto je doplnené ustanoveniami, ktorými sa zjednodušujú postupy opätovnej evidencie vozidiel a ktorými sa znižujú administratívne a byrokratické formality kladené na občanov prostredníctvom elektronického systému na výmenu informácií medzi členskými štátmi. Podľa návrhu orgány zodpovedné za evidenciu vozidiel udelia svojim partnerom v iných členských štátoch prístup k súboru údajov uložených v úradnej evidencii vozidiel a vymenovaných v prílohe I k tomuto návrhu.

O tomto návrhu sa v súčasnosti diskutuje v Európskom parlamente a Rade.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003872/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Simplifying the process of vehicle registration when moving to another EU Member State

Many European citizens are complaining about and highlighting the numerous problems involved in transferring a vehicle from one Member State to another. MEPs have also addressed this issue recently, and their efforts should result in a simplification of the rules in this area. Getting to work in border regions, buying a second-hand car in another EU country or spending half the year at your summer home with your own car — this should all be much easier in future and much less expensive.

What is the Commission's proposal regarding the effort to simplify vehicle registration when moving between Member States?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

On 4 April 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the single market ([1]).

This proposal provides that a Member State may only require the registration of a vehicle already registered in another Member State if the holder of the registration certificate is normally resident in its territory. The proposal also contains a provision that where the holder of the registration certificate moves his normal residence to another Member State, he shall request registration of a vehicle registered in another Member State within a period of six months following his arrival.

The above is complemented by provisions simplifying the procedures for the re-registration of vehicles and reducing the administrative and bureaucratic formalities on citizens through an electronic system for the exchange of information among Member States. According to the proposal, vehicle registration authorities shall grant their counterparts in other Member States access to a set of data which is stored in the official vehicle registers and enumerated in Annex I of the proposal.

This proposal is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003873/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Korigovanie debát o klíme

Každoročné summity, na ktorých sa zúčastňujú delegácie takmer 200 krajín, zástupcovia mimovládnych organizácií i biznisu, si v poslednej dobe vysluhujú predovšetkým kritiku za neúčinnosť, zdĺhavý postup, netransparentnosť, málo čiastkových dohôd a veľa prísľubov. Naviac, takéto konferencie sú finančne pomerne náročné.

I Európska komisia pripúšťa, že každoročné rokovania na klimatických summitoch pod záštitou OSN nie sú zvlášť veľkým prínosom. Akým spôsobom by teda podľa Komisie mohlo dôjsť k zefektívneniu rokovaní OSN v rámci danej problematiky?

Odpoveď pani Hedegaardovej v mene Komisie
(24. mája 2013)

Komisia nesúhlasí s názorom, že rokovania o globálnej zmene klímy v rámci Rámcového dohovoru Organizácie Spojených národov o zmene klímy neprinášajú nijaké výsledky. Hoci sú nevyhnutne zložité, v posledných rokoch sa vďaka nim dosahuje stabilný pokrok. Na poslednom samite v Dauhe sa uzavreli dve paralelné rokovania, ktoré sa začali v roku 2006. Vyše 90 krajín vrátane všetkých štátov s najsilnejšími ekonomikami, z ktorých pochádza viac než 80 % celosvetových emisií, sa dohodlo, že do roku 2020 znížia emisie, prípadne obmedzia ich nárast. Značne sa zvýšila aj transparentnosť opatrení a sprístupnili sa veľké sumy verejných i súkromných financií v oblasti klímy na podporu opatrení v rozvinutých a rozvojových krajinách. Vzhľadom na naliehavosť tejto výzvy sa už otvorilo druhé kolo rokovaní, ktoré v súčasnosti prebiehajú efektívnym spôsobom, t. j. v rámci jedného súboru rokovaní.

Komisia však súhlasí s tým, že nastal čas hľadať ďalšie spôsoby, ako zefektívniť rokovací proces a dohliadať, aby prinášal očakávané výsledky, a to možno úpravou rozhodovacích postupov. Môže sa napríklad uvažovať nad zjednodušením pracovných procesov, vývojom procedurálnych pravidiel, ktorými by sa dalo vyhnúť systematickému hľadaniu konsenzu, alebo zmenou frekvencie konferencií zúčastnených strán.

Komisia 26. marca v konzultačnom oznámení „Medzinárodná dohoda o zmene klímy, ktorá sa má prijať v roku 2015: utváranie medzinárodnej politiky v oblasti klímy po roku 2020“ (kapitola 5) uviedla tieto a ďalšie možnosti, ako zefektívniť rokovania OSN. Komisia v rámci prípravy rokovacej pozície EÚ v súvislosti s touto problematikou otvorila proces verejných konzultácií ([1]). Konzultácie sa ukončia 26. júna 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0020/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003873/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Correcting the climate debate

The annual summits attracting delegations from almost 200 countries and representatives of non-governmental organisations and business have recently faced criticism in particular over their ineffectiveness, lengthy procedures, lack of transparency, small number of partial agreements and large number of promises. These conferences are, moreover, quite costly in financial terms.

Even the European Commission concedes that the annual talks at climate summits under UN auspices are not particularly beneficial. How, in the Commission's view, might the UN negotiations on this issue be made more effective?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission does not share the view that global climate negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change are not delivering. Despite their intrinsic complexity, steady progress has been made in recent years. At the last climate summit in Doha, two parallel negotiations that were mandated in 2006 were concluded. Besides, more than 90 countries, including all major economies, representing more than 80% of global emissions, agreed to reduce their emissions or to limit the growth of their emissions by 2020. Transparency of actions has been vastly improved, and significant amounts of public and private climate finance have been mobilised to support action in developed and developing countries. Given the urgency of the challenge, the next round of negotiations has already been launched and is now taking place through a streamlined process, i.e. through one single negotiating track.

At the same time the Commission shares the view that time has come to look into ways to further enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the negotiating process, possibly by revisiting decision-making procedures, for instance by looking at ways to streamline agendas, to develop rules of procedures so as to move away from systematic consensus or to revisit the frequency of Conferences of Parties.

The Commission has set out on 26 March these and further options for strengthening the effectiveness of the UN negotiations in its Consultative Communication 'The 2015 International Climate Change Agreement: Shaping international climate policy beyond 2020' (Chapter 5). In preparation of the EU's negotiating position on this matter, the Commission has launched a public consultation process ([1]). This consultation will close on 26.6.2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0020/index_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003874/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Oživenie cyperskej ekonomiky znovuotvorením kasín

Posledný marcový týždeň Cyprus po niekoľkých mesiacoch vyjednávania dospel k uzatvoreniu dohody vzťahujúcej sa na 10-miliardovú medzinárodnú pomoc. Prezident Nikos Anastasiades predstavil dvanásťbodový plán, ktorý by v nadchádzajúcich dňoch mal byť odsúhlasený vládou. Súčasťou zmieňovaného plánu sú napríklad daňové úľavy pre firmy, pokiaľ svoje zisky reinvestujú na ostrove, či takisto zrušenie zákazu kasín.

Snahou o cyperskú záchranu pravdepodobne dôjde k prehĺbeniu recesie a k zániku tisícok pracovných miest. Je v možnostiach Komisie prispieť ku konsolidácii situácie na Cypre a k zmierneniu týchto negatívnych javov?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(3. júna 2013)

Komisia zaznamenala opatrenia, ktoré ohlásil prezident Anastasiades. Rozhodnutie zrušiť zákaz kasín je na zvážení cyperskej vlády, pokiaľ sa riadi pravidlami o hazardných hrách stanovenými podľa Zmluvy o EÚ.

Vážená pani poslankyňa možno bude súhlasiť, že napriek problémom v bankovom sektore Cyprus naďalej ponúka atraktívne podnikateľské prostredie s modernými telekomunikáciami a infraštruktúrou, vzdelanú a kvalifikovanú pracovnú silu, dobre rozvinuté služby pre podniky či relatívne nízke daňové sadzby. To všetko vedie k priamym zahraničným investíciám. Kombinácia takéhoto prostredia, politík orientovaných na rast a stabilitu a štrukturálnych reforiem potvrdených programom úpravy hospodárstva je oporou pre vytvorenie nového modelu rastu na Cypre.

S cieľom zmierniť očakávané negatívne hospodárske a sociálne vplyvy na hospodársku recesiu, Komisia zriaďuje podpornú skupinu pre Cyprus, ktorá bude cyperským orgánom pomáhať v ich úsilí zreformovať model rastu cyperského hospodárstva. Jej cieľom je urobiť všetko, čo bude v jej možnostiach, aby pomohla zmierniť sociálne dôsledky hospodárskeho šoku, a to najmä jednoduchým a rýchlym vytvorením nových typov hospodárskej činnosti, zmobilizovaním prostriedkov z rôznych nástrojov EÚ a podporou úsilia cyperských orgánov obnoviť finančnú, hospodársku a sociálnu stabilitu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003874/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Cypriot economic recovery through a reopening of casinos

In the last week of March, after several months of negotiations, Cyprus concluded an agreement on 10 billion of international aid. President Nicos Anastasiades presented a twelve-point plan, which is expected to be approved by the Government in the next few days. The plan includes, for example, tax relief for companies that reinvest their profits in the island, and the lifting of a ban on casinos.

The attempts to rescue Cyprus are likely to deepen the recession and cost thousands of jobs. Can the Commission do anything to help consolidate the situation in Cyprus and mitigate these negative effects?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission has taken note of the measures announced by President Anastasiades. The decision to lift the ban on casinos is at the discretion of the Cypriot Government as long as it follows the rules on gaming and gambling established under the EU Treaty.

The Honourable Member may agree that, despite the shrinkage of its banking sector, Cyprus continues to offer an attractive business environment with modern telecommunications and infrastructure, a well-educated and skilled labour force, well-developed business services and relatively low tax rates, all of which are conducive to foreign direct investment. The combination of such an environment and the stability-and-growth-oriented policy mix and structural reforms endorsed by the economic adjustment programme underpin the emergence of a new growth model for Cyprus.

As a way of mitigating the expected negative economic and social effects linked to the economic recession, the Commission is setting up a Support Group for Cyprus, which will assist the Cypriot authorities in their efforts to reform the growth model of the Cypriot economy. Its objective is to do all within its power to help alleviate the social consequences of the economic shock by facilitating a quick emergence of new types of economic activity, by mobilising funds from EU instruments, and by supporting the Cypriot authorities' efforts to restore financial, economic and social stability.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003875/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Britský premiér David Cameron odvracia imigrantov prichádzajúcich zo štátov Únie

Britský premiér avizoval zmeny v migračnom zákone s cieľom zamedzenia prístupu migrantov k sociálnej ochrane a k bývaniu. Prístup cudzincov k sociálnym dávkam zvažuje obmedziť po šiestich mesiacoch ich pobytu v krajine. Podľa jeho slov ľudia nemôžu donekonečna nástojiť na dávkach.

Je v kompetencii Komisie ovplyvniť túto situáciu? Prípadne zasiahnuť tak, aby novonastolený spôsob bol akceptovateľný pre obe strany – pre tú britskú a zároveň i pre európskych migrantov?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(12. júna 2013)

Komisia a členské štáty vrátane Spojeného kráľovstva prostredníctvom pracovnej skupiny správnej komisie pre koordináciu systémov sociálneho zabezpečenia spoločne pracujú na vyjasnení a zlepšení uplatňovania kritéria obvyklého pobytu vnútroštátnymi orgánmi členských štátov na účely poskytnutia prístupu občanom EÚ k dávkam sociálneho zabezpečenia.

Platné právne predpisy EÚ obsahujúce pravidlá zachovania právneho postavenia pracovníkov a právneho postavenia osôb hľadajúcich si zamestnanie v EÚ umožňujú určitý obmedzený manévrovací priestor pre vnútroštátne orgány. Predovšetkým, členské štáty môžu od osôb hľadajúcich si zamestnanie v EÚ po uplynutí 6 mesiacov vyžadovať, aby preukázali, že si hľadajú prácu a majú skutočnú šancu zamestnať sa. Okrem toho, právne predpisy EÚ umožňujú za podrobne stanovených podmienok obmedziť dobu zachovania právneho postavenia pracovníka na 6 mesiacov.

Komisia má preto v úmysle pozorne sledovať, či sú zmeny navrhnuté v Spojenom kráľovstve a – čo je ešte dôležitejšie – ich následné vykonávanie v súlade s povinnosťami vyplývajúcimi z právnych predpisov EÚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003875/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: UK Prime Minister David Cameron turns away immigrants from EU countries

The UK Prime Minister has announced changes to immigration law aimed at limiting access to social security and housing for immigrants. He is considering limiting access to social benefits for foreigners staying more than six months in the country. In his view, people should not claim benefits indefinitely.

Is it within the Commission's power to influence this situation? Could it perhaps intervene to make the new procedure acceptable to both sides — to the British and also to European immigrants?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission is working with Member States, including the UK, in a working group of the Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems to clarify and improve the application of the habitual residence test by Member State national authorities for granting EU nationals access to social security benefits.

The existing EU *acquis* on the rules concerning retention of worker status and status as an EU jobseeker allows a certain limited margin of manoeuvre for national authorities. In particular, Member States may require EU jobseekers, after a period of 6 months, to provide evidence that they are looking for work and have a genuine chance of being engaged. Also, in carefully delimited circumstances, EC law allows the period of retention of worker status to be limited to 6 months.

The Commission intends therefore to monitor carefully whether the changes proposed by the UK, and importantly their subsequent implementation, comply with the obligations imposed by EC law.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003876/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Násilie páchané na zvieratách v Bulharsku

V uplynulých dňoch vyvolalo u širokej bulharskej verejnosti vlnu nevôle verejné napadnutie psa baseballovou pálkou. Ako sa javí, polícia akoby ani nemala záujem previnilca potrestať. Je tiež dosť zarážajúce, že Bulharsko ako členský štát Európskej únie, navyše v 21. storočí, nemá vôľu trestať zločiny páchané na zvieratách i napriek tomu, že disponuje zákonom „Animal Welfare" zakazujúcim neľudské zaobchádzanie so zvieratami.

Je v možnostiach Komisie dopomôcť k náprave situácie v Bulharsku v rámci zmieňovanej problematiky? Ako by bolo možné účinne predchádzať tomu, aby sa takéto otrasné a kruté činy opakovali?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

Táto záležitosť spadá do výlučnej právomoci členských štátov, ktoré zvyčajne majú vlastné vnútroštátne predpisy proti takým činom.

Komisia nemá žiadnu právomoc na nápravu tohto druhu situácie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003876/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Violence against animals in Bulgaria

Bulgaria has recently seen a wave of public outrage, after a dog was attacked with a baseball bat in public. The police were seemingly not even interested in punishing the offender. It is also quite shocking that Bulgaria, a Member State of the European Union, is unwilling in the 21st century to punish crimes committed against animals, even though it has an animal welfare law that prohibits the inhumane treatment of animals.

Can the Commission help to remedy the situation in Bulgaria with regard to this issue? What can be done to effectively prevent the repetition of such appalling and cruel acts?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

This matter falls within the sole competence of the Member States which usually have national provisions against such acts.

The Commission has no legal power to remedy this kind of situation.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003878/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Britský nesúhlas s dodatočnými príspevkami do rozpočtu Únie

Berúc do úvahy tlak členských štátov, na rok 2012 bol prijatý oveľa nižší rozpočet v porovnaní s pôvodným návrhom Európskej komisie. Situácia nakoniec viedla až k výpadkom vo financovaní v rôznych oblastiach. Podobný scenár sa opakoval i v roku 2013. Komisia požiadala členské štáty o vyrovnanie 11,2-miliardového výpadku v rozpočte. Podľa popredných predstaviteľov Veľkej Británie je však tento krok neprijateľný.

Spojené kráľovstvo opakovane predkladá výhrady k opravenému rozpočtu. Ako sa môže Komisia pričiniť o urovnanie a dosiahnutie konsenzu? Je možné i napriek britskému nesúhlasu predísť k výpadkom v platbách?

Odpoveď pána Lewandowského v mene Komisie
(7. júna 2013)

Návrh opravného rozpočtu 2 (DAB2) bol vypracovaný na základe podrobnej analýzy potrieb a najmä na základe úrovne žiadostí o platbu, o ktorých členské štáty predpokladajú, že o ne požiadajú v roku 2013 v rámci programov politiky súdržnosti za obdobie 2007 – 2013 (68,8 miliárd EUR, z toho 1,6 miliardy EUR pre Spojené kráľovstvo), ako aj na základe neuhradených žiadostí o platbu z roku 2012 (16,2 miliardy EUR, z toho 0,6 miliardy EUR pre Spojené kráľovstvo). Vzhľadom na platobné rozpočtové prostriedky nepredstavuje žiadosť Komisie ako taká rozhodnutie minúť v roku 2013 viac finančných prostriedkov, ale dôsledok úrovne žiadostí o platbu, o ktorej rozhodol v roku 2013 a v predchádzajúcich rokoch rozpočtový orgán, ktorý Komisia plne rešpektuje.

Prijatie opravného rozpočtu legislatívnym orgánom vyžaduje kvalifikovanú väčšinu v Rade.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003878/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: British opposition to additional contributions to the EU budget

After pressure from the Member States, the budget adopted for 2012 was much smaller than the Commission's original proposal. The situation eventually led to funding shortfalls in various areas. A similar scenario was repeated in 2013. The Commission asked the Member States to cover the EUR 11.2 billion shortfall in the budget. According to senior UK representatives, however, this step is unacceptable.

The UK has repeatedly raised objections to the amended budget. How can the Commission help to achieve reconciliation and produce a consensus? Is it possible, despite British opposition, to avoid payment shortfalls?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The draft amending budget 2 (DAB2) has been established on the basis of a detailed analysis of the needs and in particular of the level of payment claims that the Member States foresee to send in 2013 for the 2007-2013 Cohesion policy programmes (EUR 68.8 billion, of which EUR 1.6 billion for the United Kingdom), as well as on the basis of the unpaid payment claims of 2012 (EUR 16.2 billion, of which EUR 0.6 billion for the United Kingdom). As such, with respect to payment appropriations, the request of the Commission does not represent a decision to spend more in 2013 but it is the consequence of the level of commitments decided in 2013 and in previous years by the Budgetary Authority fully respected by the Commission.

The adoption of an Amending Budget by the Legislative Authority requires a qualified majority in the Council.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003879/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Kľúčové postavenie inovácií v kontexte budúcnosti energetiky

V uplynulých dňoch sa v priestoroch Európskeho parlamentu v Bruseli uskutočnil workshop na tému Perspektívy výskumu a inovácií v energetike do roku 2020. Práve výskum a inovácie – tieto dva faktory – sa ukázali ako zásadné pre udržateľný energetický systém budúcnosti. Práve energia má významné postavenie pri podpore najmä tých inovácií, ktoré majú potenciál prispieť ku skutočným zmenám v oblasti energetiky.

Ako by mohla Komisia prispieť k technologickému posunu v súčasnom energetickom systéme?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(28. mája 2013)

Zaistiť prechod na ekologicky čisté, bezpečné a efektívne dodávky energie je jednou z hlavných spoločenských výzev Európy. V oznámení Energetické technológie a inovácie z 2. mája tohto roka ([1]) Komisia navrhuje stratégiu, ktorá má zaistiť, že technológie a inovácie zohrajú kľúčovú rolu v úsilí EU o transformáciu energetického systému.

Túto skutočnosť jasne uznáva i návrh Komisie na Horizont 2020, budúci program EÚ pre výskum a inovácie. Zameriava sa najmä na hlavnú výzvu, ktorou je bezpečná, čistá a efektívna energia, a spája v zjednodušenom rámci súčasné nástroje na výskum a inovácie. Avšak ďalšie výzvy programu Horizont 2020, ako aj základný výskum, takisto prispejú k energetickému výskumu.

([1]) COM(2013) 253: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/technology/strategy/strategy_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003879/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: The key role of innovation in the future context for energy

A workshop was recently held at the European Parliament in Brussels on the topic of perspectives of research and innovation towards 2020 in the energy sector. It is research and innovation-precisely these two factors-that have proved crucial to a sustainable energy system for the future. Energy has an important role in encouraging particularly those innovations that have the potential to contribute to real changes in the energy sector.

How can the Commission contribute to the technology shift in the current energy system?

Answer given by M Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

Making the transition to a clean, secure and efficient energy supply is one of the major societal challenge of Europe. In the communication on Energy Technologies and Innovation of 2 May of this year ([1]), the Commission sets outs it strategy to ensure that technology and innovation play their key role in the EU's efforts to transform the energy system.

It is also clearly recognised in the Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020, the next EU Programme for Research and Innovation, with its focus, in particular, on the key challenge of 'Secure, clean and efficient energy' and which brings together current instruments for research and innovation under a simplified framework. But other challenges of Horizon 2020, as well as basic research, will also contribute to energy research

([1]) COM(2013) 253; http://ec.europa.eu/energy/technology/strategy/strategy_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003880/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Poskytovanie zliav/úľav občanom vlastniacim preukaz občana s ťažkým zdravotným postihnutím

Tak ako určite v mnohých členských štátoch EÚ i na Slovensku existuje možnosť, aby občan s ťažkým zdravotným postihnutím požiadal príslušný úrad práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny o vydanie preukazu ZŤP. Uvedený preukaz ho následne oprávňuje na uplatnenie zliav pri cestovaní, návšteve kultúrno-spoločenských či športových podujatí a podobne. Tieto zľavy sú však poskytované na báze akejsi dobrovoľnosti či interných noriem poskytovateľa tejktorej služby, a teda takéto konanie mu nevyplýva direktívne zo zákona.

Napriek uvedenej skutočnosti, je možné z pozície Komisie situáciu ovplyvniť v zmysle, aby si prípadné zľavy držitelia preukazov ZŤP mohli uplatňovať v celoeurópskom ponímaní? Tzn. i po prekročení štátnych hraníc materského členského štátu?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-003455/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003880/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Provision of discounts/rebates for holders of severe disability cards

In Slovakia, as is certainly the case in many other EU Member States, severely disabled citizens may apply to the appropriate Office of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family for a severe disability card. The card then entitles the holder to discounts when travelling, attending cultural, social and sporting events, etc. However, the discounts are provided on a voluntary basis or according to the internal regulations of the service provider concerned, and are not therefore directly prescribed by law.

Nevertheless, is it possible for the Commission to influence the situation so that holders of severe disability cards can receive discounts on a Europe-wide basis? That is to say, even after they have crossed the borders of their home Member State?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003455/2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003881/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Daňové úniky

Takmer deväťdesiatka novinárov Konzorcia investigatívneho žurnalizmu z Washingtonu disponuje informáciami o 2,5 miliónoch tajných účtov spoločností a jednotlivcov zo 170 krajín. Publikácie viac ako dvoch miliónov dokumentov opisujú offshorový finančný priemysel a skryté bohatstvo vyše 130 000 osôb účastných na medzinárodných daňových únikoch a vyhýbaní sa daňovým povinnostiam.

Len samotná Európska únia prichádza na daňových únikoch ročne o jeden bilión dolárov. V súčasnom období krízy je viac ako 26 miliónov ľudí, ktorí si nemôžu nájsť prácu, tisíce ľudí prichádzajú o svoje úspory a sú nútení čeliť ťažkým životným podmienkam. V danom kontexte, akými konkrétnymi opatreniami sa chce i Komisia zasadiť za sociálnu spravodlivosť? Ako sa možno pričiniť o prísnejšie nastavenie právnych predpisov, aby jednoducho nedochádzalo k aktívnemu obchádzaniu systému, a teda k tak rozsiahlym daňovým únikom či finančným stratám?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(27. mája 2013)

Komisia súhlasí, že konkurencieschopné a spravodlivé hospodárstvo je kľúčové pre udržateľné hospodárske oživenie. Daňový únik predstavuje útok na základné zásady spravodlivosti. Svedomití daňovníci by nemali zvýšenými daňami nahrádzať straty na príjme štátu spôsobené daňovými podvodníkmi a neplatičmi.

Komisia dlhodobo poukazuje na význam cezhraničných dohôd a daňových rajov pri zatajovaní zdaniteľných príjmov a aktív a v tomto zmysle aj koná. Dva hlavné príklady sú smernica o zdaňovaní príjmu z úspor prijatá v roku 2003 vrátane súvisiacich dohôd s jurisdikciami mimo EÚ a smernica o administratívnej spolupráci prijatá v roku 2011. Napokon v decembri 2012 Komisia začala vykonávať akčný plán boja proti daňovým podvodom a únikom. Stanovuje v ňom súbor konkrétnych opatrení, ktoré možno vypracovať v súčasnosti a nasledujúcich rokoch a ktoré v zásade podnietia k užšej spolupráci a automatickej výmene informácií. V sprievodnom odporúčaní o dobrej správe vecí verejných sa navrhuje, aby členské štáty používali spoločné kritériá založené na transparentnosti, výmene informácií a spravodlivej daňovej súťaži, pomocou ktorých identifikujú a vytvoria čierny zoznam tretích krajín, ktoré nedodržiavajú minimálne normy dobrej správy vecí verejných v daňových otázkach. Okrem toho odporúča členským štátom, aby uplatňovali konkrétne cielené opatrenia, ktorými povzbudia tretie krajiny k prijatiu takýchto minimálnych noriem. Akčný plán a odporúčania predstavujú dôležitý príspevok k širšej medzinárodnej debate o riešení daňových podvodov a únikov, do ktorej sa zapája OECD, G20 a G8. Komisia bude naďalej dôrazne podporovať automatickú výmenu informácií, ktorá by sa na európskej i medzinárodnej úrovni mala stať normou transparentnosti a výmeny informácií v daňových záležitostiach, a víta posledný vývoj v tejto oblasti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003881/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Tax evasion

Almost 90 journalists from the Consortium of Investigative Journalists in Washington have information about 2.5 million secret corporate and personal accounts in 170 countries. More than 2 million documents have been published that describe the offshore finance industry and the hidden wealth of over 130 000 people who engage in international tax evasion and tax avoidance.

The European Union alone loses USD 1 billion a year through tax evasion. In the present period of crisis, there are more than 26 million people who cannot find work, and thousands of people are losing their savings and are forced to endure difficult living conditions. In this context, what specific measures does the Commission intend to take in the interests of social justice? What can be done to help tighten legislation in order simply to prevent the active circumvention of the system and such extensive consequent tax evasion and financial losses?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Commission agrees that a competitive and fair economy is essential to sustainable economic recovery. Tax evasion is an attack on the fundamental principle of fairness. Honest taxpayers should not suffer tax increases to make up for revenue losses caused by tax fraudsters and evaders.

The Commission has long recognised the significance of cross-border and offshore arrangements in concealing taxable income and assets and acted accordingly. The adoption of the Savings Directive in 2003, including related agreements with non-EU jurisdictions as well as the Administrative Cooperation Directive of 2011, are two main examples. More recently in December 2012, the Commission launched an Action Plan against tax fraud and evasion. It identifies a series of specific measures which can be developed now and in years to come, essentially pushing for more cooperation and automatic exchange of information. The accompanying Recommendation on good governance proposes that Member States use common criteria, based on transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition to identify and blacklist third countries that do not comply with minimum standards of good governance in tax matters. It also recommends that Member States apply specific targeted measures to encourage third countries to adopt such minimum standards. The action plan and Recommendations represent an important contribution to the wider international debate on tackling tax fraud and evasion involving the OECD, the G20 and the G8. The Commission will continue to strongly promote the automatic exchange of information as the future European and international standard of transparency and exchange of information in tax matters and welcomes recent developments in this area.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003882/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Po nesúhlase veľkej Británie s navýšením rozpočtu EÚ rovnaký postoj i zo strany Holandska

Prihliadnuc na tlak členských štátov, nakoniec bol prijatý oveľa nižší rozpočet na rok 2012 v porovnaní s pôvodným návrhom predloženým Európskou komisiou. Podobná situácia nastala i pre prípad roku 2013, čo, okrem iného, malo za následok medziinštitucionálne spory prameniace predovšetkým z otázky, ako vykryť chýbajúci „schodok".

Po výhradách Spojeného kráľovstva k opravenému rozpočtu obdobné stanovisko zaujali i zástupcovia Holandska. Čím konkrétnym má Komisia snahu, resp. vôľu pričiniť sa o nájdenie akceptovateľného riešenia?

Odpoveď pána Lewandowského v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

Návrh opravného rozpočtu č. 2 (NOR č. 2) pre rok 2013 Komisia pripravila na základe podrobného posúdenia potrieb v súvislosti s týmito tromi aspektami: a) počtom žiadostí o platby, ktoré členské štáty predpokladajú zaslať v roku 2013 v súlade s programami v rámci politiky súdržnosti na obdobie rokov 2007 – 2013; b) objemom neuhradených žiadostí o platby ku koncu roka 2012; a c) v prípade ostatných programov, konkrétnou analýzou, ktorá zohľadňuje veľké škrty v prijatom rozpočte v porovnaní s pôvodným návrhom rozpočtu predloženým Komisiou. Pokiaľ ide o platobné rozpočtové prostriedky, tak návrh Komisie v žiadnom prípade nepredstavuje rozhodnutie o zvýšení výdavkov v roku 2013, ale je len dôsledkom objemu záväzkov, o ktorých rozpočtový orgán rozhodol v roku 2013 a v predchádzajúcich rokoch, čo Komisia plne rešpektuje.

Komisia vyjadruje poľutovanie na tým, že sa Spojené kráľovstvo a Holandsko nepripojili ku konsenzu v záujme schválenia NOR č. 2 predloženého Komisiou, ani neboli súčasťou kvalifikovanej väčšiny, ktorá podporila politickú dohodu o prvom kroku v objeme 7,3 miliardy EUR pre NOR č. 2, o čom Rada ECOFIN rozhodla 14. mája.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003882/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Following UK opposition to the EU budget increase, the Netherlands takes the same line

In view of pressure from the Member States, a much smaller budget was finally adopted for 2012 than the one originally proposed by the European Commission. A similar situation has also occurred in relation to 2013, resulting, among other things, in interinstitutional disputes, over the question of how to cover the missing 'shortfall'.

Following the United Kingdom's objections to the amended budget, the representatives of the Netherlands also took a similar position. How, specifically, does the Commission intend, or wish, to contribute towards finding an acceptable resolution?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The draft amending budget 2 (DAB2) for 2013 has been prepared by the Commission on the basis of a detailed needs assessment covering three aspects: (a) the level of payment claims that the Member States foresee to send in 2013 corresponding to the 2007-2013 Cohesion policy programmes; (b) the volume of payment claims still unpaid at the end of 2012, and (c) for the other programmes, a specific analysis taking into account the severe cuts made in the adopted budget compared to the initial draft budget proposed by the Commission. Being for payment appropriations, the proposal from the Commission does not represent in any way a decision to spend more in 2013 but is the mere consequence of the level of commitments decided in 2013 and in previous years by the Budgetary Authority, something which is fully respected by the Commission.

The Commission regrets that the UK and Netherlands were not able to join a consensus to approve DAB2 as presented by the Commission and were not part of the qualified majority supporting the political agreement on the first step of EUR 7.3 billion for DAB2 decided by the Ecofin Council on 14 May.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003883/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8. apríla 2013)

Vec: Ochrana ohrozených jazykov

V Európe sa dorozumievame stovkami jazykov. Asi stodvadsať z nich sa však používa tak minimálne, že im takpovediac hrozí zánik. Podľa vyjadrení odborníkov na danú problematiku je jazyk považovaný za ohrozený, keď sa ho už neučia žiadne deti a zároveň ľudia, pre ktorých je tento materinskou rečou, ho prestanú používať.

Všeobecne, európske inštitúcie by mali zastávať významnú úlohu pri podpore a ochrane európskych jazykov. Zvažuje aj Komisia nejaké konkrétne opatrenia, ktorými by bolo možné aktívne prispieť k zabráneniu hroziaceho úpadku európskej jazykovej rozmanitosti?

Odpoveď pani Vassiliouovej v mene Komisie
(28. mája 2013)

Rešpektovanie bohatej kultúrnej a jazykovej rozmanitosti Únie je zakotvené v článku 3 Zmluvy o Európskej únii, ktorý vyzýva európske inštitúcie, aby zaistili ochranu a rozvoj európskeho kultúrneho dedičstva.

Komisia prispieva k ochrane európskej jazykovej rozmanitosti v rozsahu svojich kompetencií prostredníctvom programov v oblasti vzdelávania a kultúry.

Program celoživotného vzdelávania kladie v roku 2013 dôraz na jednej strane na projekty zamerané na udržiavanie a zvyšovanie vitality menej používaných európskych jazykov, ako sú jazyky menších krajín, regionálne a menej hovorené jazyky a na druhej strane na siete, ktoré podporujú výmenu osvedčených postupov zameraných na jazykovú rozmanitosť a učenie sa týchto jazykov.

Zlepšenie výučby a učenia sa jazykov a podpora jazykovej rozmanitosti patria medzi hlavné priority návrhu Komisie týkajúceho sa nového programu v oblasti vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy s názvom „Erasmus pre všetkých“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003883/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Protection of endangered languages

We use hundreds of languages in Europe. However, about 120 of them are used so little that they are in danger of extinction. According to experts, a language is regarded as endangered if it is no longer being learnt by children, and native speakers cease to use it.

European institutions should play a substantial role in supporting and protecting European languages. Is the Commission considering any specific measures that would actively contribute to halting the imminent decline in European linguistic diversity?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

Respect for the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the Union is enshrined in Article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union, whereby the European institutions are called upon to ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.

The Commission contributes to the safeguarding of Europe's linguistic diversity, within the limits of its competences, through its programmes in the field of education and culture.

In 2013 the Lifelong Learning Programme gave priority (1) to projects aimed at sustaining and increasing the vitality of less used European languages, such as the languages of smaller countries, regional and less widely spoken languages; and (2) to networks fostering the exchange of good practices aimed at linguistic diversity and the learning of these languages.

In the Commission's proposal for the new education and training programme, 'Erasmus for All', improving the teaching and learning of languages and promotion of linguistic diversity are among its main priorities.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-003884/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(8 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprawa zatrzymania na Białorusi pani Teresy Strzelec

Obywatelka Polski pani Teresa Strzelec w kwietniu 2012 r. wybrała się na wycieczkę na Białoruś. Tuż po przekroczeniu granicy jej samochód uległ awarii. Oddała go do naprawy w warsztacie samochodowym w Brześciu na terenie Białorusi. Następnie wraz z przyjaciółmi udała się w dalszą podróż. Gdy wróciła z wycieczki od właściciela warsztatu dowiedziała się, że auta nie ma. Okazało się, że po naprawie pojazdu nieletni syn właściciela warsztatu, bez jej zgody i wiedzy, bezprawnie jeździł samochodem. Został wówczas zatrzymany prze białoruską milicję, która samochód skonfiskowała.

Pani Teresa Strzelec chcąc odzyskać samochód zdecydowała się wystąpić na Białorusi na drogę sądową. Pod koniec stycznia 2013 r. sąd w Brześciu wydał wyroku, w którym nakazał białoruskiej administracji oddać pojazd kobiecie. Wtedy okazało się, że białoruscy celnicy, nie mając do tego żadnego tytułu, auto pani Teresy sprzedali. Mało tego celnicy poinformowali panią Teresę, że za dopuszczenie auta do sprzedaży na terenie Białorusi musi jeszcze zapłacić karę oraz dodatkowo podatki i cło. Gdy pani Teresa Strzelec przybyła w marcu bieżącego roku do Brześcia wyjaśnić sprawę, została zatrzymana przez białoruską milicję. Władze białoruskie anulowały jej też wizę, uzasadniając to niezapłaceniem podatku oraz cła. Pozbawiono panią Teresę możliwości opuszczenia terenu Białorusi. Skutkiem tego, wbrew własnej woli, wciąż musi tam pozostawać.

1. Czy Komisja została poinformowana przez władze Polski o tej sprawie, a zwłaszcza dramatycznej sytuacji pani Strzelec?

2. Czy Komisja podjęła interwencję w sprawie bezprawnego zatrzymania obywatelki Polski i UE na Białorusi, a wcześniej bezprawnego rozporządzania jej mieniem i wymuszaniem na niej zapłaty nienależnego cła i podatku?

3. Jakie kroki zamierza podjąć Komisja, by skutecznie pomóc pani Teresie Strzelec oraz by podobne nadużycia wobec obywateli krajów członkowskich UE w przyszłości się nie zdarzały?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(21 maja 2013 r.)

Instytucje UE nie posiadają uprawnień w zakresie ochrony konsularnej obywateli UE, a kwestią tą zajmowały się właściwe służby polskie. Delegatura UE w Mińsku została jednak poinformowana o tej sprawie i podniosła ją w rozmowach z władzami Białorusi. Teresa Strzelec otrzymała pozwolenie na opuszczenie Białorusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003884/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Detention of Teresa Strzelec in Belarus

In April 2012, Teresa Strzelec, a Polish citizen, visited Belarus. Immediately after she had crossed the border, her car broke down. She put it into a garage in the Belarusian city of Brest to be repaired and then continued her journey together with friends. When she returned from her trip she was told by the owner of the garage that he did not have her car. It turned out that after the vehicle had been repaired the garage owner's son, a minor, illegally drove the car without her consent or even knowledge. He was stopped by the Belarusian police, who confiscated the car.

Ms Strzelec obviously wanted to recover her car and so decided to take the matter to court. At the end of January 2013, the court in Brest issued a judgment ordering the Belarusian administration to return the vehicle to her. However, without any authorisation whatsoever, the Belarusian customs had sold Ms Strzelec's car. Not only that, but the customs officials also informed her that because the car was sold in Belarus Ms Strzelec had to pay a fine, as well as taxes and customs duties. When Ms Strzelec went to Brest in March this year to sort the matter out she was detained by the Belarusian police. The Belarusian authorities cancelled her visa, on the basis that she had not paid the taxes and customs duties. Moreover, she was not allowed to leave Belarus. As a result, she is being forced to remain there against her will.

1. Has the Commission been informed about this case by the Polish authorities?

2. Has the Commission taken any action in connection with the unlawful detention of a Polish and EU citizen in Belarus, and the earlier unlawful disposal of her property and the demand that she pay undue duties and tax?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take to provide effective help for Teresa Strzelec and to ensure that such abuses of EU citizens do not happen in future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

EU institutions have no competence for the consular protection of EU citizens and the matter was dealt with by the competent services of Poland. The EU Delegation in Minsk was however aware of this case and raised it with the Belarusians authorities. Teresa Strzelec was allowed to leave Belarus.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003885/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(8. april 2013)

Om: Udbudsregler

Den 28. marts 2012 sejlede M/S Ramona ind i den jernbanebro, der krydser Limfjorden i Danmark.

Sammenstødet betød, at broklappen blev beskadiget i en sådan grad, at alle togforbindelser mellem Nordjylland og det øvrige Danmark blev afbrudt og har været det under det efterfølgende reparationsarbejde.

Reparationen af broen omfattede konstruktion af en ny broklap. Dette arbejde blev af BaneDanmark sat i udbud i totalentreprise.

I den danske offentlighed er der efterfølgende opstået en debat om nødvendigheden af at sende opgaven i udbud i overensstemmelse med udbudsdirektivet. Bl.a. bragte det danske medie TV2 Nord den 21. november 2012 en artikel med overskriften: »Ikke nødvendigt at sende bro i udbud«, hvoraf det fremgår, at »ifølge artikel 31 i udbudsregulativet er der en undtagelsesbestemmelse, der siger, at man i særlige tilfælde kan undgå at sende arbejdet i udbud«. I samme artikel udtaler en professor i udbudsret, at »i tilfælde hvor der opstår noget helt uforudset, det kunne for eksempel være et jordskælv eller en oversvømmelse, som kræver, at man handler her og nu og ikke kan vente et halvt år, så er der mulighed for at indgå en kontrakt uden at udbyde den i det konkrete tilfælde.«

Kan Kommissionen på baggrund af overstående oplyse, om den vurderer, at den skade på jernbanebroen over Limfjorden, der skete ved påsejlingen den 28. marts 2012 var af en sådan karakter, at de danske myndigheder kunne have undladt at sende reparationen af jernbanebroen over Limfjorden i udbud i overensstemmelse med artikel 31 i udbudsregulativet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(29. maj 2013)

Ordregivende myndigheder kan kun indgå offentlige kontrakter ved udbud med forhandling uden forudgående udbudsbekendtgørelse i de tilfælde, der er anført i artikel 31 i direktiv 2004/18/EF. I henhold til artikel 31, stk. 1, litra c), kan denne procedure eksempelvis anvendes, hvis det er strengt nødvendigt, når tvingende grunde som følge af begivenheder, som de ordregivende myndigheder ikke har kunnet forudse, ikke gør det muligt at overholde de tidsfrister, der gælder ved offentlige eller begrænsede udbud eller ved udbud med forhandling efter forudgående udbudsbekendtgørelse. De omstændigheder, der påberåbes som begrundelse for den tvingende nødvendighed, må under ingen omstændigheder kunne tilskrives de ordregivende myndigheder.

I det pågældende tilfælde mente den danske myndighed ikke, at det var nødvendigt at anvende proceduren i artikel 31. Den vurderede derimod, at det var muligt at indgå kontrakt for de nødvendige reparationer med korrekt offentliggørelse af kontrakt.

Det påhviler den pågældende ordregivende myndighed i et bestemt tilfælde at godtgøre, at betingelserne for brug af udbud med forhandling uden udbudsbekendtgørelse er opfyldt. Kommissionen finder det ikke passende for den at vurdere den hypotetiske brug af denne procedure under omstændigheder, der var gældende for en overstået sag.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003885/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Procurement rules

On 28 March 2012, the ship *Ramona* collided with the railway bridge that crosses the Limfjord in Denmark.

The impact damaged the bascule to such an extent that all train services between North Jutland and the rest of Denmark were cancelled and remained so while the subsequent repair work was carried out.

The repair of the bridge comprised construction of a new bascule. This work was put out to tender by the Danish state railway network operator, BaneDanmark, as an all-inclusive contract.

A debate subsequently arose among the Danish public concerning the necessity of putting the work out to tender in accordance with the Public Procurement Directive. Among other things, the Danish broadcaster TV2 Nord published an article on 21 November 2012 with the headline: 'Ikke nødvendigt at sende bro i udbud' [Unnecessary to put the bridge out to tender], in which it was stated that 'Article 31 of the Public Procurement Directive contains a derogation clause which states that in certain cases it is possible to avoid putting the work out to tender'. In the same article, a professor in procurement law states that 'in cases where something completely unforeseen happens, such as an earthquake or a flood, for example, which requires that action be taken immediately and it cannot wait six months, it is possible to enter into a contract without putting it out to tender in that particular case.'

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it believes that the damage to the railway bridge over the Limfjord caused by the collision on 28 March 2012 was of such a nature that the Danish authorities could have dispensed with putting the repair of this bridge out to tender in accordance with Article 31 of the Public Procurement Directive?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Contracting authorities may award public contracts by a negotiated procedure without prior publication of a contract notice only in the cases enumerated in Article 31 of Directive 2004/18/EC. It is stipulated in Article 31 (1) (c) that this procedure may be applied for example if it is strictly necessary when, for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the contracting authority in question, the time limits for the open, restricted or negotiated procedures with publication of a contract notice cannot be complied with. The circumstances invoked to justify extreme urgency must not in any event be attributable to the contracting authority.

In the case at issue, the Danish contracting authority did not consider it necessary to apply the procedure under Article 31. On the contrary it considered that it was possible to award the contract for the necessary repair works through a properly advertised public contract.

It is indeed the task of the contracting authority in question to justify in a specific case that the conditions for using the negotiated procedure without publication are met. The Commission would not find it appropriate to make any assessment of the hypothetical use of this procedure under the specific circumstances of a case which occurred in the past.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003886/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(8. april 2013)

Om: Elbiler 2

Kan Kommissionen i forlængelse af sit svar af 8. marts 2013 på forespørgsel E-000711/2013 oplyse, om den erkender, at der, trods UNECE's ændringsserie 2 til det eksisterende regulativ nr. 100 om ensartede forskrifter for godkendelse af elektriske batteridrevne køretøjer for så vidt angår specifikke krav til konstruktion og funktionel sikkerhed, fortsat eksisterer et sikkerhedsproblem for beredskabstjenesters personale, eftersom regulativet ikke indeholder bestemmelser, der kan sikre, at beredskabspersonale under et redningsarbejde hurtigt visuelt kan skelne højspændingskabler i en forulykket elbil fra de øvrige kabler i køretøjet?

Kan Kommissionen endvidere oplyse, om den mener, at det ville være hensigtsmæssigt, at det i det omtalte regulativ blev specificeret, at højspændingskabler i elbiler skal have en specifik farve, som sætter beredskabspersonale i stand til at foretage en hurtig visuel identifikation af sådanne kabler under et redningsarbejde?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(30. maj 2013)

Det ærede medlem henvises til Kommissionens svar på E-000711/2013 ([1]).

Derudover påpeger Kommissionen, at UNECE's regulativ nr. 100 omhandler elbilers sikre drift, herunder beredskabspersonalets behov.

I den forbindelse stilles der i artikel 5.1.1.5. i UNECE's regulativ nr. 100 krav om mærkning, der viser højspændingsudstyr, på eller tæt på køretøjets batteri. Symbolet skal også bruges på indkapslinger og blokader, som, hvis de fjernes, blotlægger strømførende dele af højspændingskredsløb. Desuden skal højspændingskabler, der ikke er placeret i indkapslinger, identificeres af en ydre orange kappe.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003886/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Electric cars 2

Following on from its answer of 8 March 2013 to Question E-000711/2013, can the Commission state whether it acknowledges the fact that, notwithstanding the UNECE second series of amendments to Regulation No 100 on uniform provisions concerning the approval of battery electric vehicles with regard to specific requirements for the construction and functional safety, there continues to be a safety issue for the emergency service personnel, as the regulation does not contain any provisions that are able to ensure that, during a rescue operation, the personnel are able quickly to distinguish visually between high voltage cables in an electric vehicle that has been involved in an accident and all the other cables in the vehicle?

Can the Commission also state whether it would consider it appropriate for the aforementioned regulation to specify that high-voltage cables in electric vehicles should have a specific colour to enable emergency service personnel to quickly identify such cables visually during a rescue operation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Commission's reply to E-000711/2013 ([1]).

In addition, the Commission would like to clarify that UNECE Regulation No 100 addresses the safe operation of electric vehicles, including the needs of emergency service personnel.

In this respect, Article 5.1.1.5. of UNECE Regulation No 100 establishes the obligation of displaying a mark which is indicative of high voltage equipment on or near the battery of the vehicle. The symbol must also be used on enclosures and barriers that, when removed, may expose live parts of high voltage circuits. Besides, high voltage cables which are not located within enclosures shall be identified by an outer covering in orange colour.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003887/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Alternative Wohnkonzepte — Förderung und Kooperation

Wohn- und Baugemeinschaften mit generationenübergreifender Planung bringen eine große humane und finanzielle Dividende auf verschiedensten Ebenen, die von Unterstützung bei der Pflege älterer Mitbürger bis hin zu gemeinschaftlichen Finanzierungen reicht. Die sozialen und integrativen Elemente solcher Projekte verwirklichen einen starken gesellschaftlichen Mehrwert und führen zu eklatanten staatlichen Kostenersparnissen.

1. Gibt es bereits einen strukturell gesteuerten Erfahrungsaustausch und Zusammenarbeit bei der Verwirklichung generationsübergreifender Wohnprojekte zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wenn nicht: Erachtet die Kommission einen derartigen Austausch für sinnvoll und plant sie, ihn zu fördern?

3. Wenn ja: In welcher Form und in Kooperation welcher Mitgliedstaaten?

4. Sieht die Kommission Möglichkeiten, die Auswirkungen der individualisierten Gesellschaft auf dem Wohnungsmarkt durch EU-weite Kooperationen in positive Bahnen zu lenken?

5. Wird dabei, insbesondere im Bereich der regionalen Entwicklung, auf die positiven städtebaulichen Effekte geachtet?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2013)

Derzeit finden kein strukturell gesteuerter Erfahrungsaustausch und keine entsprechende Zusammenarbeit im Bereich von generationsübergreifenden Wohnprojekten auf EU-Ebene statt.

Die integrierte Stadtentwicklung wird im Rahmen der europäischen Kohäsionspolitik im Zeitraum 2014-2020 intensiviert: in jedem Mitgliedstaat sind mindestens 5 % der EFRE-Mittel zu diesem Zweck bereitzustellen und Immobilieninvestitionen können Teil der betreffenden Maßnahmen sein. Die künftige Kohäsionspolitik ermöglicht Investitionen in Wohnraum zur Förderung der Energieeffizienz und der Nutzung erneuerbarer Energien sowie zur Unterstützung der Sanierung und der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Belebung benachteiligter städtischer und ländlicher Gemeinden und Gebiete.

Der Wohnungsbau fällt in die ausschließliche Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten.

Gleichwohl hat die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten erneut aufgefordert, im Rahmen des Pakets zu Sozialinvestionen ([1]) den Zugang zu erschwinglichem hochwertigem Wohnraum zu gewährleisten. Wohnungspolitische Maßnahmen können im Kontext der Methode der offenen Koordinierung im Sozialbereich und mit allen zuständigen Interessenträgern im Rahmen der Plattform zur Bekämpfung der Armut und der sozialen Ausgrenzung thematisiert werden.

([1]) KOM(2013)83 endg. vom 20.2.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003887/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Alternative living concepts — promotion and cooperation

Residential communities and joint building ventures with cross-generational planning produce huge human and financial dividends on many different levels, ranging from support in the care of the elderly to communal financing. The social and integrative elements of such projects achieve a high degree of social added value and result in clear cost savings for the State.

1. Is a structurally controlled exchange of experience and cooperation in connection with the implementation of cross-generational residential projects already taking place between the EU Member States?

2. If not, does the Commission consider such an exchange to be useful and does it plan to promote it?

3. If so, in what form and in cooperation with which Member States?

4. Does the Commission believe there are opportunities to steer the impact of an individualised society on the housing market in a positive direction by means of EU-wide cooperation?

5. In so doing, in particular in the area of regional development, will attention be given to the positive effects of urban development?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

There is currently no structurally controlled exchange of experience and cooperation related to cross-generational residential projects at EU level.

Integrated urban development will be reinforced within European cohesion policy 2014-2020, with obligatory allocation of min. 5% of ERDF resources for this purpose in each Member State, and housing investments can be part of these actions. Future cohesion policy enables housing investments in support of energy efficiency and renewable energies as well as physical, economic and social regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities.

Housing is an exclusive competence of Member States.

However, the Commission recently called again for Member States to ensure access to affordable quality housing as part of the Social Investment Package ([1]). Housing policies can be addressed in the context of the Social Open Method of Coordination and with all relevant stakeholders as part of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion.

([1]) COM(2013)83 final of 20.2.2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003888/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Gewalt und Faschismus im Sport

In der Vergangenheit wurde mehrfach offenbar, dass im sportlichen Umfeld negative Strömungen zu bemerken sind: Es bilden sich immer mehr Fanzusammenschlüsse, die rechtsextremes Gedankengut vertreten und verbreiten; oft herrscht eine Nähe zu rechtsextremen politischen Gruppierungen. Der gemeinsame Sport wird zur Rekrutierung von Mitgliedern genutzt, und insbesondere Jugendliche sind besonders gefährdet, auf diesem Weg in ein Umfeld von Gewalt, Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Homophobie zu geraten.

1. Plant die Kommission in Anbetracht der oben genannten Sachverhalte, Kooperationen zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten zu fördern, die gezielt gegen Rechtsextremismus im Sport vorgehen?

2. Gibt es bereits europaweite sozialpädagogische Initiativen, die einen Ausstieg von Mitgliedern rechtsextremer Fanvereinigungen (besonders von Jugendlichen) ermöglichen und fördern?

3. Gibt es bereits EU-weite Programme, die gewalttätige Fans abseits der strafrechtlichen Verfolgung vor dem — ausnehmend starken — Rückfallrisiko schützen (würden)?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass rechtsextremes Gedankengut von Sportfans insbesondere im Fußball zu Gewalt, Rassismus, Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Homophobie führt. Die Kommission hat es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht, alle Formen von Diskriminierung und Gewalt zu bekämpfen. Wie die diesbezügliche Zusammenarbeit mit den Fußballorganisationen bisher ausgesehen hat, wurde bereits ausführlicher in der Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-00026/2013 ([1]) beschrieben.

Gemäß dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, die öffentliche Aufstachelung zu Gewalt oder Hass aufgrund von Rasse, Hautfarbe, Religion, Abstammung oder nationaler oder ethischer Herkunft unter Strafe zu stellen. Die Kommission prüft zurzeit die von den Mitgliedstaaten gemeldeten nationalen Durchführungsmaßnahmen und wird hierzu noch im Jahr 2013 einen Bericht vorlegen. Die einzelnen rassistischen oder fremdenfeindlichen Straftaten müssen vor nationalen Gerichten verhandelt und nach einzelstaatlichem Recht untersucht werden.

Für vorbeugende und pädagogische Maßnahmen in Fanclubs, Schulen und Vereinen hat die Kommission im Zuge der Vorbereitenden Maßnahmen im Bereich des Sports und im Rahmen des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen Finanzhilfen bereitgestellt.

Außerdem enthält „Erasmus für alle“, das von der Kommission vorgeschlagene künftige Programm für allgemeine und berufliche Bildung, Jugend und Sport, ein Kapitel zum Sport, das u. a. auf die Bekämpfung länderübergreifender Bedrohungen für den Sport — etwa in Form von Doping, Spielabsprachen, Gewalt, Rassismus und Intoleranz — abzielt.

Bisher gibt es keine gezielten europaweiten sozialpädagogischen Initiativen, die sich mit dem Ausstieg von Mitgliedern rechtsextremer Fanclubs oder mit dem Rückfallrisiko befassen.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003888/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Violence and fascism in sport

On many occasions in the past there have been clear signs of negative trends in the realm of sport: more and more fan associations representing and disseminating right-wing extremist ideas are forming; these often form something akin to extreme right-wing political groups. The sport they have in common is used to recruit members, and young people in particular are especially susceptible to ending up on this path into a world of violence, xenophobia and homophobia.

1. In view of the above, is the Commission planning to promote cooperation between the EU Member States in taking targeted action against right-wing extremism in sport?

2. Are there already any Europe-wide socio-educational initiatives in place to enable and encourage members of right-wing extremist fan associations (particularly young people) to leave these associations?

3. Are there already any EU-wide programmes in place that, outside of criminal proceedings, (would) protect violent fans from the — particularly high — risk of reoffending?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission is aware that right-wing extremist ideas of fans in particular in football lead to violence, racism, xenophobia and homophobia. The Commission is committed to fighting all forms of discrimination and violence. Details of cooperation undertaken to date on this issue with football authorities were provided in reply to Written Question E-00026/2013 ([1]).

Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA obliges Member States to sanction with criminal penalties the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Commission is currently analysing the national implementing measures notified by Member States and will prepare a report to this end in 2013. Individual cases of racist or xenophobic acts need to be pursued in national proceedings and examined under national law.

Under the 2010 and 2011 Preparatory Actions in the field of sport as well as the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Commission has provided financial support for preventive and educational projects, involving supporters, schools and clubs.

In addition, the Commission proposal for 'Erasmus for All', the future programme for education, training, youth and sport, includes a Sport Chapter whose objectives are, amongst others, to tackle transnational threats to sport, such as doping, match fixing, violence, racism and intolerance.

So far no specific Europe-wide socio-educational initiatives have been supported to encourage members of right-wing extremist fan associations to leave these behind or to address the risk of reoffending.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN .

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003889/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Teiche zur öffentlichen Freizeitnutzung — Wasserwirtschaftliche Planung

Es ist von großer Wichtigkeit, die übergeordnete europäische wasserwirtschaftliche Planung in den Fokus der staatlichen Verwaltung zu rücken, insbesondere um die Umwelt und die intakte Wasserlandschaft zu verbessern, zu schützen und zu erhalten.

Im Bereich der Einrichtung von Teichen zur öffentlichen Freizeitnutzung (Schwimmteiche) ist Österreich schon seit langem ein Vorreiter. Sowohl die Errichtung von Kleinbadeteichen als auch ihr Betrieb kommt um circa ein Drittel günstiger als der eines vergleichbaren Freibades.

1. Sofern der Kommission dieser Umstand bekannt ist, gedenkt sie auf europäischer Ebene entsprechende Initiativen zu setzen (Empfehlungen abzugeben), um so eine solide Variante zum konventionellen Chlorbeckenbad zu schaffen und dabei indirekt wie auch direkt einen gesundheitlichen, sozialen und budgetären Mehrwert zu erzielen?

2. Sind bereits europaweite Empfehlungen oder Initiativen zu einer Umstellung/Ergänzung der konventionellen Chlorbeckenbadwirtschaft geplant?

3. Betrachtet man die momentane europäische Badelandschaft im Kontext des erklärten Ziels des Klima- und Umweltschutzes, würde sich dann eine spezifische Regelung der Verwendung europäischer Oberflächengewässer als sinnvoll erweisen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Der Kommission sind die von der Frau Abgeordneten genannten wirtschaftlichen Daten nicht bekannt. Sie beabsichtigt nicht, eine spezielle Empfehlung zur Behandlung von Schwimmbeckenwasser abzugeben, wird aber gemäß Artikel 18 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 528/2012 über die Bereitstellung auf dem Markt und die Verwendung von Biozidprodukten ([1]) einen allgemeinen Bericht über den nachhaltigen Einsatz von Biozidprodukten wie beispielsweise Chlor veröffentlichen und gegebenenfalls diesbezügliche Maßnahmen vorschlagen.

In der Richtlinie 2006/7/EG über die Qualität der Badegewässer und deren Bewirtschaftung ([2]) sind Vorschriften für die Bewirtschaftung der Badegewässer hinsichtlich ihrer Qualität festgelegt, die darauf abzielen, die Umwelt zu erhalten und zu schützen, ihre Qualität zu verbessern und die Gesundheit des Menschen zu schützen. Die Richtlinie gilt für Badeplätze an Oberflächengewässern, nicht aber für Schwimm- und Kurbecken. Die Kommission hat derzeit nicht die Absicht, zusätzliche Vorschriften für Badegewässer vorzuschlagen.

([1]) ABl. L 167 vom 27.6.2012.
([2]) ABl. L 64 vom 4.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003889/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Untreated pools for public recreational use — water resources planning

It is extremely important for public administration to give attention to overarching European water resources planning, in particular in order to improve, protect and preserve the environment and the intact waterscape.

When it comes to establishing untreated pools for public recreational use (swimming pools), Austria has been leading the way for a long time. Both the establishment and the operation of small bathing pools with untreated water are cheaper by around a third than the establishment and operation of a comparable outdoor swimming pool with treated water.

1. If the Commission is aware of this situation, does it intend to put in place corresponding initiatives at European level (issue recommendations) for creating such a sound alternative to the conventional chlorinated pools, thereby indirectly and directly achieving health-related, social and budgetary added value?

2. Are there already any plans for Europe-wide recommendations or initiatives with regard to switching from or supplementing the conventional chlorinated swimming pool system?

3. Looking at the current European bathing landscape in the context of the declared aim of climate and environmental protection, would specific regulation of the use of European surface waters be appropriate?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission is not familiar with the economic data mentioned by the Honourable Member. While it does not intend to issue any specific recommendation on the particular issue of swimming pool water treatment, it does intend to issue a general report on sustainable use of biocidal products such as chlorine, and to propose measures in this respect if appropriate, as provided for by Article 18 of Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 ([1]) concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products.

Provisions for the management of bathing water quality are laid down in Directive 2006/7/EC ([2]) concerning the management of bathing water quality aimed to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and to protect human health. It covers bathing sites in surface waters, although excludes swimming pools and spa pools. The Commission does not intend, at present, to propose additional provisions for bathing waters.

([1]) OJ L 167, 27.6.2012.
([2]) OJ L 64, 4.3.2006.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003890/13
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(8 april 2013)

Betreft: Gevaar van uit de EU afkomstige technologie voor legale interceptie voor de EU-veiligheid

De Amerikaanse directeur nationale inlichtingen, James Clapper, getuigde onlangs voor de Amerikaanse Senaat dat de VS heeft vastgesteld dat controletechnologie die op de markt wordt gebracht voor doeleinden van legale interceptie, wordt gebruikt tegen VS-systemen ([1]).

— Weet de Commissie of controle- en cyberexploitatietechnologie van EU-origine, met name technologie die op de markt wordt gebracht voor doeleinden van legale interceptie en die wordt verkocht aan overheden, ooit is gebruikt tegen de belangen van de EU, tegen haar kritieke infrastructuur of anderszins? Zo niet, waarom niet?

— Wat onderneemt de Commissie om de verkoop van technologie voor legale interceptie en cyberexploitatie onder de lidstaten, alsmede aan derde landen, te controleren en te traceren?

— Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de afwezigheid van de rechtsstaat of het ontbreken van onafhankelijk toezicht op controleactiviteiten door rechtbanken de legitimiteit van het gebruik en de verkoop van technologie voor legale interceptie in het gedrang brengt? Zo niet, waarom niet?

— Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat technologie voor legale interceptie en cyberexploitatie al te gemakkelijk kan worden gebruikt om de mensenrechten te schenden en de strategische belangen en de veiligheid van de EU te schaden? Zo niet, waarom niet?

— Wat is de Commissie van plan te ondernemen om te zorgen voor transparantie en de aflegging van rekenschap en om ervoor te zorgen dat de passende waarborgen voorhanden zijn wat het gebruik betreft van technologie voor legale interceptie en cyberexploitatie die aan overheden in de EU of daarbuiten wordt aangeboden?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(16 juli 2013)

In het Verdrag van Lissabon wordt expliciet bevestigd dat nationale veiligheid een exclusieve bevoegdheid van de lidstaten blijft. De Commissie kan het gebruik van bewakingstechnologieën in individuele lidstaten dus niet beoordelen als die enkel om redenen van nationale veiligheid worden gebruikt.

Tegelijkertijd wordt in de EU-strategie voor cyberveiligheid het volgende gesteld: „De wereldwijde toename van connectiviteit mag niet vergezeld gaan van censuur of grootschalige bewaking. De EU dient maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen te bevorderen en internationale initiatieven op te zetten om het wereldwijde overleg op dit gebied te bevorderen". Op basis hiervan is de Commissie het eens met de stelling van het geachte Parlementslid dat cyberexploitatietechnologie een bedreiging voor de mensenrechten kan vormen. Toch moeten ook de voordelen van dergelijke technologie worden erkend.

In het kader van de herziening van het EU-beleid inzake uitvoercontrole uit veiligheidsoverwegingen en naar aanleiding van het verslag van de publieke raadpleging „veiligheid en concurrentievermogen waarborgen in een veranderende wereld" ([2]) onderzoekt de Commissie verschillende opties voor uitvoercontrole om beter te zijn opgewassen tegen uitdagingen in verband met de uitvoer van bepaalde materialen die voor internet- en/of telecommunicatiesurveillance kunnen worden gebruikt op een wijze die in strijd is met de mensenrechten. Eind 2013 wordt een mededeling verwacht waarin een langetermijnvisie voor de strategische uitvoercontroles van de EU en concrete beleidsinitiatieven om de uitvoercontroles aan te passen aan de snel veranderende technologische, economische en politieke omstandigheden worden beschreven.

De Commissie is ingenomen met de recente goedkeuring van de Richtlijn over aanvallen op informatiesystemen ([3]) door het Europees Parlement.

([1]) http://intelligence.senate.gov/130312/clapper.pdf, blz. 3.
([2]) (SWD(2013)7 van 17 januari 2013).
([3]) In die richtlijn is onder meer het volgende bepaald: „De lidstaten treffen de nodige maatregelen om het opzettelijk met technische middelen onderscheppen van niet-openbare transmissies van computergegevens […], indien onrechtmatig begaan, strafbaar te stellen."

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003890/13
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Threat of EU sourced lawful interception technologies to EU security

The US Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, recently testified before the United States Senate that the US has seen surveillance technologies, marketed for 'lawful interception' purposes, used to target US systems ([1]).

— Does the Commission know whether surveillance and cyber exploitation technologies of EU origin, particularly those marketed for lawful interception purposes and sold to governments, have ever been used against EU interests, critical infrastructure, or otherwise? If not, why not?

— What is the Commission doing to monitor and track the sale of lawful interception and cyber exploitation technologies among Member States, as well as to non-EU countries?

— Does the Commission agree that the absence of the rule of law or the independent oversight of surveillance activities by courts challenges the legitimacy of the use and sale of lawful interception technologies? If not, why not?

— Does the Commission agree that lawful interception and cyber exploitation technologies can too easily be used to damage human rights, as well as the strategic interests and security of the EU? If not, why not?

— What does the Commission plan to do to ensure transparency and accountability, and to ensure that the appropriate safeguards are in place regarding the use of lawful interception and cyber exploitation technologies, which are marketed to governments either in the EU or elsewhere?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 July 2013)

The Treaty of Lisbon explicitly confirms that national security remains the sole competence of Member States (MS), so the Commission is not in a position to assess the use of surveillance technologies in individual MS when the scope is restricted to national security reasons.

At the same time, the EU Cybersecurity Strategy states that: 'Increased global connectivity should not be accompanied by censorship or mass surveillance. The EU should promote corporate social responsibility, and launch international initiatives to improve global coordination in this field.' Based on this, the Commission would agree with the Honourable Member's assertions regarding the threat to human rights posed by cyber exploitation technologies, although the benefits of such technology should also be appreciated.

Within the revision of the EU security export control policy, and further to the report on the public consultation on 'security and competitiveness in a changing world' ([2]), the Commission is considering options for export controls to better address challenges associated to the export of certain materials that might be used for Internet monitoring and/or telecommunication surveillance in violation of human rights. A Communication outlining a long-term vision for EU strategic export controls and concrete policy initiatives to adapt export controls to rapidly changing technological, economic and political conditions is due by the end of 2013.

The Commission welcomes the European Parliament's recent adoption of the directive on attacks against information systems ([3]).

([1]) http://intelligence.senate.gov/130312/clapper.pdf at page 3.
([2]) (SWD (2013)7 of 17 January 2013).
([3]) which states that: MS 'shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the intentional interception by technical means, of non-public transmissions of computer data […] is punishable as a criminal offence when committed without right.'

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003892/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(8 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wycofanie słów kojarzonych z chrześcijaństwem w Belgii

Jak donosi Radio Watykańskie w belgijskich szkołach zakazano używania słów kojarzących się bezpośrednio z symboliką chrześcijańską. Z użycia zniknęły między innymi takie słowa jak Wielkanoc, Boże Narodzenie czy Wszystkich Świętych.

1. Komisja wielokrotnie stawała w obronie praw mniejszości seksualnych oraz mniejszości muzułmańskiej w Europie. Czy wobec tego, analogicznie, stanie w obronie praw chrześcijan zamieszkujących francuskojęzyczne regiony Belgii?

2. Jak Komisja ocenia sytuację chrześcijan w Belgii, czy powyższe zarządzenie nie jest rażącym ograniczeniem wolności słowa oraz wolności do wiary, której chrześcijanie mają prawo dawać wyraz w codziennym życiu?

3. Czy zakaz używania słów, które mają nie tylko kontekst religijny, ale też wpisane są w kulturę i tradycję szanowaną na terenie obejmującym dzisiejszą Belgię od ponad tysiąca lat, nie jest dowodem na narastającą w tym kraju nietolerancję wobec chrześcijan oraz chrystianofobię?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(14 czerwca 2013 r.)

Jak wspomniano w pisemnej odpowiedzi na pytanie E-007918/2012, Komisja Europejska przywiązuje wielką wagę do wolności wyznania, włącznie z wolnością manifestowania wyznania, zapisanej w Karcie praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej oraz w Europejskiej Konwencji Praw Człowieka. W szczególności art. 10 ust. 1 Karty stanowi, że każdy ma prawo do uzewnętrzniania swojej religii poprzez nauczanie.

Niemniej jednak, na mocy Traktatów, na których opiera się Unia Europejska ([1]), Komisja Europejska nie ma ogólnych uprawnień do podejmowania działań w stosunku do państw członkowskich. Może to uczynić jedynie wtedy, gdy sprawa odnosi się do jakiegoś aspektu prawa Unii Europejskiej. Zgodnie z art. 51 ust. 1 Karta praw podstawowych ma zastosowanie do państw członkowskich tylko, gdy wprowadzają one w życie prawo Unii Europejskiej. W tym przypadku nie wydaje się, aby sprawa, o której pisze Pan Poseł, była związana z wprowadzeniem w życie prawa UE. Jak podano w odpowiedzi na pytanie pisemne H-0141/09, przepisy prawa krajowego dotyczące symboli religijnych w budynkach użyteczności publicznej należą do systemu prawa krajowego.

Komisja stosuje wszystkie dostępne instrumenty zgodnie z uprawnieniami przekazanymi Unii na mocy traktatów, aby walczyć z nietolerancją ze względu na wyznanie. Komisja w dalszym ciągu monitoruje zgodność państw członkowskich z prawodawstwem UE zakazującym dyskryminacji, mowy nienawiści i przestępstw z nienawiści ([2]), włącznie z decyzją ramową w sprawie rasizmu i ksenofobii zakazującą mowy nienawiści i przestępstw ze względu na wyznanie ([3]) oraz dyrektywą w sprawie równego traktowania w zakresie zatrudnienia i pracy ([4]) zakazującą bezpośredniej i pośredniej dyskryminacji ze względu na religię lub wyznanie w miejscu pracy. Unia Europejska również wspiera, poprzez swoje programy finansowania, działalność mającą na celu popularyzowanie i ochronę praw związanych z wolnością wyznania wśród społeczeństwa ([5]).

([1]) Traktat o Unii Europejskiej (TUE) oraz Traktat o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej.

([2]) Szczegółowe informacje można znaleźć na stronach: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm i http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm

([3]) Decyzja ramowa Rady 2008/913/WSiSW z dnia 28 listopada 2008 r. w sprawie zwalczania pewnych form i przejawów rasizmu i ksenofobii za pomocą środków prawnokarnych, Dz.U. L 328 z 6.12.2008.

([4]) Dyrektywa Rady 2000/78/WE z dnia 27 listopada 2000 r. ustanawiająca ogólne warunki ramowe równego traktowania w zakresie zatrudnienia i pracy, Dz.U. L 303, z 2.12.2000, s. 16.

([5]) Przykłady takich projektów można znaleźć na stronie http://www.religareproject.eu/ lub http://www.iom.fi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95&Itemid=82; oraz http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/web/3480/3481/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003892/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Ban on the use of words associated with Christianity in Belgium

Vatican Radio has reported that Belgian schools have banned the use of words directly associated with Christian symbolism. Words such as Easter, Christmas or All Saints are no longer to be used.

1. The Commission has repeatedly defended the rights of sexual minorities and the Muslim minority in Europe. Will it therefore take similar action by defending the rights of Christians living in the French-speaking regions of Belgium?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the situation of Christians in Belgium? Does it not believe that the above ruling is a blatant infringement of freedom of speech and freedom of belief, which Christians have the right to exercise in their daily lives?

3. Given that these words have not only a religious context, but also form part of the culture and traditions held sacred for over one thousand years in the area covering modern-day Belgium, is the ban on their use not evidence of the growing intolerance of Christians and Christianophobia in the country?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

As noted in Written Reply to Question E-007918/2012, the European Commission attaches great importance to the freedom of religion, including the freedom to manifest religion, enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. In particular, Article 10(1) of the Charter states that everyone has the right to manifest their religion in teaching.

Nevertheless, under the Treaties on which the European Union is based ([1]), the European Commission has no general powers to intervene with the Member States. It can only do so if an issue of European Union law is involved. According to Article 51(1), the Charter of Fundamental Rights applies to Member States only when they are implementing European Union law. In this case, it does not appear that the matter to which the Honourable Member refers to is related to the implementation of EC law. As stated in response to written question H-0141/09, the national laws on religious symbols in public buildings come under the domestic legal system.

The Commission uses all the instruments at its disposal, in line with the powers conferred to the Union by the Treaties, to fight against intolerance based on religion. It continues to monitor Member States' compliance with EU legislation banning discrimination, hate speech and hate crime ([2]), including the framework Decision on racism and xenophobia prohibiting hate speech and crime based on religion ([3]), and the Employment Equality Directive ([4]), which prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of religion or belief in the workplace. The EU also provides support, through its financing programmes, to activities aimed at promoting and protecting the right to freedom of religion on the ground ([5]).

([1]) Treaty on European Union and Treaty on the functioning of the European Union.
([2]) For further information, see for instance: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm
([3]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.
([4]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.
([5]) For examples of projects, please see
http://www.religareproject.eu/;
http://www.iom.fi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95&Itemid=82; and
http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/web/3480/3481/index.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003893/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Strategii privind împiedicarea răspândirii în UE a bolilor contagioase

Având în vedere experiențele anterioare legate de răspândirea gripei AH1N1 în Uniunea Europeană, Comisia este rugată să prezinte un punct de vedere cu privire la strategia avută în vedere în ipoteza unei potențiale răspândiri în statele membre UE a virusului H7N9.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(23 mai 2013)

De la izbucnirea gripei A(H7N9) în China, în martie 2013, Comisia monitorizează îndeaproape evoluția evenimentelor și se află deja în contact cu statele membre, cu Centrul European de Prevenire şi Control al Bolilor (ECDC) și cu Organizația Mondială a Sănătății (OMS). ECDC a evaluat deja riscul pentru Uniunea Europeană (UE) pe baza situației actuale și a actualizat evaluarea riscului pentru UE la 8 mai.

În aceeași zi, Comisia a organizat o teleconferință specială cu membrii Comitetului pentru securitate sanitară și cu punctul de contact al Sistemului de alertă precoce și răspuns rapid, pentru a comunica evaluarea actualizată. În cursul acestei reuniuni, OMS a prezentat, de asemenea, cele mai actuale informații deținute cu privire la gripa A(H7N9).

În ipoteza unei potențiale răspândiri a gripei A(H7N9) în statele membre ale UE, mecanismele de coordonare și de răspuns la amenințare ar fi consolidate. Autoritățile din domeniul sănătății publice din statele membre și-ar coordona măsurile de sănătate publică prin intermediul Sistemului de alertă precoce și răspuns rapid („*Early Warning and Response System*" — EWRS) și al Comitetului pentru securitate sanitară al UE („*EU Health Security Committee*" — HSC). În funcție de caracterul de epidemie al modului de evoluție a evenimentelor, ar urma consultări periodice și coordonarea suplimentară a măsurilor de sănătate publică, care s-ar desfășura sub responsabilitatea statelor membre.

De asemenea, s-ar asigura schimbul reciproc de informații și cooperarea cu Organizația Mondială a Sănătății și cu alți parteneri internaționali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003893/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Strategies for preventing the spread of infectious diseases within the EU

Taking into account past experience concerning the spread of influenza A H1N1 in the European Union, the Commission is asked to provide an opinion on the strategy envisaged in the event of a potential spread of the H7N9 virus in EU Member States.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Since the outbreak of influenza A(H7N9) in China in March 2013 the Commission is closely monitoring the event and is already in contact with the Member States, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The ECDC has already assessed the risk for the European Union (EU) based on the current situation and updated the risk assessment for the EU on 8 May.

On the same day the Commission has organised a special teleconference with the members of the Health Security Committee and the contact point of the Early Warning and Response System to share the updated assessment. During that meeting WHO also informed about their latest intelligence as regards influenza A(H7N9).

In the event of a potential spread of influenza A(H7N9) in the EU Member States the mechanisms to coordinate and respond to the threat would be enhanced. Public Health Authorities in the Member States would coordinate their public health measures via the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) and the EU Health Security Committee (HSC). Regular consultations and further coordination of public health measures to be undertaken under the responsibility of the Member States would follow depending on the epidemic characteristics of the event.

Mutual exchange of information and cooperation with the World Health Organisation and other international partners would also be ensured.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003894/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Inițiative discriminatorii ale autorităților Marii Britanii cu privire la cetățenii europeni

Guvernul britanic a anunțat că intenționează să reducă programul de ajutoare legale din oficiu, astfel încât imigranții din Marea Britanie să nu mai poată obține ajutor legal din oficiu. Autoritățile britanice motivează această inițiativă invocând o pretinsă viitoare invazie din partea cetățenilor europeni din România și Bulgaria, începând cu anul 2014.

„Reglementările sunt implementate înainte de sosirea a zeci de mii de romani și bulgari, începând de anul viitor, când restricțiile vor fi ridicate", a arătat o publicație britanică.

Această inițiativă sugerează că potențialii „imigranți" cetățeni europeni din România sau Bulgaria ar putea necesita ajutoare legale din oficiu în mai mare măsură decât alte categorii de cetățeni europeni având reședința în Marea Britanie.

Comisia este rugată să exprime un punct de vedere cu privire la această inițiativă.

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(25 iunie 2013)

Articolul 47 din Carta drepturilor fundamentale a Uniunii Europene prevede că se acordă asistență juridică celor care nu dispun de resurse suficiente, în măsura în care aceasta este necesară pentru a asigura accesul efectiv la justiție. Carta se aplică statelor membre numai în cazul în care acestea pun în aplicare dreptul UE.

La punerea în aplicare a legislației UE nu poate exista nicio discriminare pe motiv de naționalitate în ceea ce privește accesul la asistență juridică. Existența unui sistem accesibil cetățenilor Regatului Unit, dar nu și altor cetățeni ai UE ar constitui un caz de discriminare pe motiv de naționalitate. În astfel de cazuri, instanțele naționale ar fi invitate să aplice legislația UE și, prin urmare, să respingă automat orice dispoziții discriminatorii. De asemenea, cetățenii ar avea posibilitatea de a înainta plângeri Comisiei Europene.

În plus, pentru a promova acordarea asistenței juridice în litigiile transfrontaliere în favoarea persoanelor care nu dispun de resurse suficiente, atunci când această asistență este necesară pentru a asigura accesul efectiv la justiție, Uniunea Europeană a adoptat Directiva 2003/8/CE pentru a îmbunătăți accesul la justiție în litigiile transfrontaliere, prin stabilirea unor norme minime comune privind asistența juridică acordată în astfel de litigii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003894/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Discriminatory initiatives by the UK authorities towards European citizens

The British Government has announced plans to cut the *ex-officio* legal aid scheme, in such a way that immigrants in the United Kingdom can no longer obtain legal aid *ex-officio*. The British authorities are justifying this initiative by citing an alleged future invasion of Europeans citizens from Romania and Bulgaria, from the year 2014 onwards.

'The regulations are being implemented prior to the arrival of tens of thousands of Romanians and Bulgarians from next year onwards, when the restrictions will be lifted', stated a British publication.

This initiative suggests that potential European 'immigrant' citizens from Romania or Bulgaria could require legal aid *ex-officio* to a greater extent than other categories of European citizens residing in the United Kingdom.

The Commission is asked to take a view on this initiative.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union provides that legal aid should be made available to those who lack sufficient resources in so far as such aid is necessary to ensure effective access to justice. The Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing EC law.

In the implementation of EC law there can be no discrimination on the grounds of nationality in access to legal aid. If there would be a scheme accessible to UK citizens but not to other EU citizens, this would constitute a discrimination on grounds of nationality. In such case, national courts would be called upon to apply EC law and thus directly set aside any discriminatory provision. Citizens would also be able to complain to the EU Commission.

In addition, to promote the application of legal aid in cross-border disputes for persons who lack sufficient resources where aid is necessary to secure effective access to justice, the European Union adopted Directive 2003/8/EC to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid for such disputes.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003895/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Poziția autorităților române privind situația societății Oltchim

Cu privire la situația combinatului Oltchim (România), ministrul român al economiei a declarat recent textual următoarele: „Comisia Europeană ezită să ne acorde ajutor de stat. Până acum nu avem o decizie finală, dar a avertizat că faptul că s-a luat energie electrică fără contraprestație financiară a fost deja o formă de ajutor de stat (…)".

Comisia este rugată să comenteze această declarație.

Răspuns dat de Almunia în numele Comisiei
(6 iunie 2013)

Decizia de a acorda un ajutor de stat unei întreprinderi este luată de către statele membre, și nu de către Comisie. Rolul Comisiei este de a verifica dacă ajutoarele de stat notificate de către un stat membru sunt compatibile cu tratatul și, astfel, dacă ele pot fi aprobate. România nu și-a notificat intențiile de acordare a unui ajutor pentru salvare întreprinderii Oltchim, și, prin urmare, Comisia nu are nicio bază pentru luarea unei decizii oficiale în această chestiune. Comisia poate să confirme însă că a luat contact cu autoritățile române pe această temă și că a pus întrebări pentru a afla dacă unele dintre criteriile de aprobare a unui ajutor pentru salvare în favoarea întreprinderii Oltchim ar putea fi îndeplinite, în special condiția ca Oltchim să nu fi beneficiat deja de sprijin public în ultimii 10 ani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003895/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Position of the Romanian authorities regarding the situation of Oltchim

Romania's economics minister recently made the following statement regarding the situation of the Oltchim plant in Romania: 'The European Commission is reluctant to grant us state aid. We have not received a final decision so far, but have been warned that, since it has been receiving electricity without making any financial payment for it, this was already a form of state aid (…)'.

Can the Commission comment on this?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The decision to grant state aid to an undertaking is taken by the Member States and not by the Commission itself. The role of the Commission is to verify if any state aid notified by a Member State can be approved because it is compatible with the Treaty. Romania did not notify plans to grant rescue aid to Oltchim, and therefore the Commission has no basis for taking a formal decision on the subject. Nevertheless, the Commission can confirm that it had contacts with the Romanian authorities on this subject, where it asked questions on whether some of the criteria for the approval of rescue aid to Oltchim could be met — in particular, the condition that Oltchim should not have already received public support in the last 10 years.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003896/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Restricții propuse în achiziționarea terenurilor agricole de către străini

Producătorii agricoli români privesc cu îngrijorare apropierea momentului liberalizării pieței funciare din 2014, când persoanele fizice străine vor putea cumpăra terenuri agricole în România fără restricții.

În aceste condiții, organizațiile de producători solicită instituirea unor restricții pentru cumpărători, de exemplu:

— condiționarea celor care vor să cumpere terenuri agricole de o experiență de 3-5 ani în domeniul agricol în statul din care provin;

— instituirea unui drept de preemțiune al statului român la cumpărarea terenurilor agricole.

Comisia este rugată să își prezinte punctul de vedere cu privire la legalitatea unor astfel de eventuale măsuri, precum și dacă astfel de măsuri există în alte state membre ale UE.

Răspuns dat de Dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(4 iunie 2013)

În conformitate cu Tratatul de aderare din 2005, începând din 1 ianuarie 2014, TFUE ([1]) se aplică integral legislației românești privind achiziția de terenuri agricole. Prin urmare, este necesar să se respecte principiul liberei circulații a capitalurilor.

Libera circulație a capitalurilor poate fi limitată prin norme naționale justificate de motivele invocate la articolul 65 din TFUE și „nu trebuie să constituie un mijloc de discriminare arbitrară". În plus, Curtea a decis că libera circulație a capitalurilor poate fi restricționată prin măsuri naționale justificate de cerințe prioritare de interes general, cu condiția ca legislația națională în cauză să nu fie discriminatorie. În ambele cazuri, măsurile naționale trebuie să fie adecvate pentru a se garanta îndeplinirea obiectivului urmărit și să nu depășească ceea ce este necesar pentru atingerea acestui obiectiv.

Mai mult, obiectivul legislației naționale referitoare la terenurile agricole trebuie să fie în conformitate cu politica agricolă comună. În elaborarea acesteia, în concordanță cu articolul 39 din TFUE, trebuie să se țină seama „de natura specială a activităților agricole care decurge din structura socială a agriculturii și din discrepanțele structurale și naturale existente între diferitele regiuni agricole".

Prin urmare, orice măsură națională care limitează libera circulație a capitalurilor urmărește un obiectiv specific care este propriu situației din statul membru respectiv și nu poate fi comparată cu cea dintr-un alt stat membru; prin urmare, o astfel de comparație între măsurile luate în diferite state membre poate fi artificială.

În consecință, în absența unor informații cuprinzătoare privind situația specifică dintr-un stat membru anume, Comisia nu este în măsură să evalueze compatibilitatea măsurilor menționate în întrebarea dumneavoastră cu legislația UE.

([1]) Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003896/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Proposed restrictions on the acquisition of agricultural land by foreign nationals

Agricultural producers in Romania are concerned at the prospect of the imminent liberalisation of the land market from 2014, when foreign nationals will be able to purchase agricultural land in Romania without any restrictions.

Under these circumstances, producer organisations are requesting the introduction of restrictions on purchasers, such as:

— making it a condition for those wishing to purchase agricultural land to have 3-5 years' experience in the agricultural sector in their country of origin;

— granting the Romanian State a right of pre-emption to purchase agricultural land.

Can the Commission outline its view regarding the legality of such measures and as to whether such measures are in force in other EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

According to the Accession Treaty of 2005, from 1 January 2014 the TFEU ([1]) fully applies to the Romanian legislation on the acquisition of agricultural real estate, thus the free movement of capital principle should be observed.

The free movement of capital may be restricted by national rules which are justified by reasons referred to in Article 65 TFEU and 'shall not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination'. Additionally, the Court has held that the free movement of capital may be restricted by national measures justified by overriding requirements of the general interest, provided that the national legislation in question is non-discriminatory. In both cases national measures must be suitable for securing the pursed objective and must not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain it.

Moreover, the objective of the national legislation relating to agricultural land has to be consistent with the common agricultural policy in the elaboration of which, according to Article 39 TFEU, account must be taken 'of the particular nature of agricultural activity, which results from the social structure of agriculture and from structural and natural disparities between the various agricultural regions'.

Thus any national measures limiting the free movement of capital pursue a specific objective which is particular to the situation of that Member State and may not be comparable to another Member State; hence the comparison of such measures amongst the Member States may be artificial.

Consequently, in the absence of comprehensive information on the situation within a Member State, the Commission is not in a position to assess the compatibility with EC law of the measures mentioned in the present question.

([1]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003897/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Licitația pentru redactarea Programului Național de Dezvoltare Rurală 2014-2020 al României

Ministerul Agriculturii și Dezvoltării Rurale din România a organizat o licitație pentru desemnarea unui consultant care urmează să redacteze Programul Național de Dezvoltare Rurală (PNDR) 2014-2020. La data depunerii acestei întrebări, licitația nu a fost finalizată, cu toate că proiectul ar trebui transmis Comisiei la 1 ianuarie 2014, iar până atunci sunt necesare consultări cu partenerii sociali, cu beneficiarii, cu producătorii.

Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Dacă procedura încheierii unui contract cu un consultant privat reprezintă o practică răspândită în statele membre UE.

2. Dacă contractul la care se referă această licitație face obiectul unor plăți din fonduri europene.

3. Dacă Comisia urmărește derularea licitației menționate.

4. Care sunt consecințele unor eventuale întârzieri în înaintarea către Comisie a proiectului de Program Național de Dezvoltare Rurală 2014-2020, prevăzută pentru 1 ianuarie 2014?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(23 mai 2013)

1) Mai multe state membre folosesc servicii de consultanță private pentru a sprijini pregătirea planurilor lor de dezvoltare rurală. Serviciile de acest tip pot contribui, de exemplu, la elaborarea evaluării *ex ante* și a altor analize preliminare relevante.

2) Planul Național de Dezvoltare Rurală al României pentru perioada 2007-2013 menționează la capitolul 16 (*Acțiuni de asistență tehnică*) posibilitatea de a utiliza fonduri de asistență tehnică pentru sprijinirea pregătirii viitoarei perioade de programare.

3) Comisia monitorizează împreună cu statul membru implementarea generală a Planului Național de Dezvoltare Rurală. Responsabilitatea aplicării procedurilor de licitație revine statului membru.

4) Calitatea programului elaborat și termenul în care este depus acesta sunt în întregime responsabilitatea statului membru. Serviciile Comisiei pot lansa procedura de aprobare a Planului Național de Dezvoltare Rurală pentru perioada 2014-2020 doar după ce autoritățile române depun oficial propunerea lor. În consecință, orice întârziere în elaborarea planului va duce la întârzierea aprobării acestuia de către Comisie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003897/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Invitation to tender for the drafting of the National Rural Development Programme for Romania 2014-2020

The Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has organised an invitation to tender for the appointment of a consultant to draw up the National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020. As at the date of submission of this question, the invitation to tender has yet to be finalised, although the project should be submitted to the Commission by 1 January 2014. Until then, consultations will need to take place with the social partners, beneficiaries and producers.

The Commission is asked to respond to the following questions:

1. Is the procedure of concluding a contract with a private consultant common practice in EU Member States?

2. Is the contract to which this invitation to tender refers subject to EU funding?

3. Is the Commission monitoring the progress of the aforementioned invitation to tender?

4. What are the consequences of any delay in submitting the draft National Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 to the Commission, scheduled for 1 January 2014?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

1. Several Member States are using private consultancy services to assist with the preparation of their rural development programmes. Such services can contribute, for example, to the drafting of the *ex-ante* evaluation and other relevant preliminary analysis.

2. The National Rural Development Programme of Romania for 2007-2013 mentions under Chapter 16 *(Technical assistance operations)*, the possibility to use technical assistance funds for supporting the preparation of the future programming period.

3. The Commission monitors together with the Member State the overall implementation of the National Rural Development Programme. The tendering procedures are implemented under the Member State's responsibility.

4. The quality of the programme drafted and the time taken for submission fall entirely under the MS responsibility. The Commission services can only launch the procedure for approval of the National Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 once the Romanian authorities have officially submitted their proposal. Consequently, any delay in preparation of the programme will delay its approval by the Commission.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003898/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Propuneri privind noua conducere a Ministerului Public și a Direcției Naționale Anticorupție din România

Comisia a arătat în repetate rânduri că autoritățile române ar trebui să numească o nouă conducere a Ministerului Public și a Direcției Naționale Anticorupție, „care să poată demonstra independența, integritatea și profesionalismul necesare pentru a se bucura de încrederea publicului și a continua să aibă rezultate eficiente”.

Recent, Prim-ministrul României, care deține cu titlu interimar și funcția de ministru al Justiției, a făcut nominalizările pentru funcțiile menționate fără organizarea unui concurs sau a unui alt tip de procedură de selecție. Premierul Ponta a sugerat că lista cu nominalizări este rezultatul unei negocieri politice între partide, cu girul Comisiei Europene.

Comisia este rugată să prezinte un punct de vedere oficial cu privire la aceste nominalizări.

Răspuns dat de dl Barroso în numele Comisiei
(13 iunie 2013)

Comisia a urmărit discuțiile referitoare la numirea conducerii Ministerului Public și a Direcției Naționale Anticorupție din România și a fost informată, în mod corespunzător, de către autoritățile române, asupra procedurii de numire. După cum a arătat în rapoartele sale, aceste posturi au o importanță deosebită.

Comisia a luat act de numele procurorilor care au fost numiți și va continua să urmărească procedura de numire pentru posturile vacante.

După cum subliniază distinsul deputat, Comisia a făcut recomandări specifice cu privire la calitatea numirilor, precum și cu privire la procedura de numire. Aceste recomandări au fost, de asemenea, sprijinite de Consiliul de Miniștri în concluziile sale și rămân valabile.

Comisia consideră că, de acum încolo, este responsabilitatea noii conduceri să demonstreze rigurozitate și independență în îndeplinirea funcției sale.

Comisia va continua să monitorizeze, în cadrul mecanismului de cooperare și verificare, progresele înregistrate de România în aceste domenii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003898/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Proposals regarding the new leadership of the Public Prosecutor's Department and the National Anti-Corruption Directorate in Romania

The Commission has pointed out on several occasions that the Romanian authorities ought to appoint a new leadership of the Public Prosecutor's Department and National Anti-Corruption Directorate, 'which can demonstrate the independence, integrity and professionalism needed to enjoy the confidence of the public and continue to deliver effective results'.

Romania's prime minister, who temporarily holds the title and function of justice minister, recently nominated the candidates for the positions mentioned without organising any competition or other kind of selection procedure. Prime Minister Ponta has suggested that the list of nominations is the result of political negotiations between the parties with the Commission's endorsement.

Can the Commission present an official point of view regarding these nominations?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2013)

The Commission has been following the discussions around the nomination of the Heads of the Public Prosecutor's Office and of the National Anti-Corruption Directorate in Romania. It has been duly informed by the Romanian authorities of the nomination procedure. As its reports have underlined, these posts are of great importance.

The Commission has taken note of the names of the prosecutors who have been appointed and will continue to follow the nomination procedure for the remaining vacant positions.

As the honourable member points out, the Commission has made specific recommendations, on the quality of the appointments as well as on the procedure. These were amongst the recommendations also given support in conclusions from the Council of Ministers, and they remain valid.

The Commission considers that it is now for the new leadership to show rigour and independence in delivering their function.

The Commission will continue to monitor under the cooperation and verification mechanism the progress of Romania in these matters.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003899/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Accesul rafinatorilor din UE la zahărul brut după 2017

Având în vedere că producția zahărului în sistem de cote va înceta, cel mai probabil, după 2017, Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarea întrebare: cum va funcționa mecanismul care va permite rafinatorilor accesul la zahărul brut, în condițiile în care, potrivit estimărilor, acordurile EPA/EBA/DOMs sau alte FTAs nu vor putea acoperi nevoile de consum și necesarul de rafinare din UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(17 mai 2013)

În contextul reformei politicii agricole comune, anunțată la 12 octombrie 2011, Comisia nu a propus prelungirea sistemului de cote pentru zahăr după data de 1 octombrie 2015. În opinia Comisiei, sfârșitul sistemului de cote este cea mai potrivită opțiune pentru a oferi sectorului zahărului o perspectivă pe termen lung. Echilibrul dintre producția UE de (sfeclă de) zahăr și importurile de zahăr (din trestie de zahăr) provenite din statele ACP/țările cel mai puțin dezvoltate sau realizate pe baza acordurilor de liber schimb va depinde de competitivitatea relativă a celor două industrii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003899/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Access to raw sugar for EU refiners after 2017

Given that the quota system for sugar production is going to end, most likely after 2017, can the Commission reply to the following question? How will the mechanism enabling refiners to access raw sugar operate against a background where, according to estimates, the EPA/EBA and French overseas departments (DOMs) agreements or other FTAs will be unable to cover the EU's consumption needs and refining requirements?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

In the context of the common agricultural policy reform announced on 12 October 2011, the Commission has not proposed to prolong the sugar quota regime beyond 1 October 2015. For the Commission the end to the quota system is the most appropriate option for providing the sugar sector with a long-term perspective. The balance between EU (beet) sugar production and ACP/LDCs and FTAs (cane) sugar imports will depend on the relative competitiveness of both industries.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003900/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Alternative la interzicerea insecticidelor pe bază de neonicotinoide

Comisia Europeană a propus în luna ianuarie suspendarea utilizării pentru o perioadă de cel puțin doi ani a trei pesticide folosite în culturile de floarea-soarelui, porumb, rapiță și bumbac.

Doi furnizori de substanțe utilizate în agricultură au prezentat un plan de îmbunătățire a sănătății albinelor, ca alternativă la interdicția utilizării insecticidelor pe bază de neonicotinoide. Printre altele, sunt propuse creșterea suprafețelor cultivate cu flori, pentru a oferi un habitat și hrană pentru albine, precum și elaborarea unui program de monitorizare a sănătății acestor insecte.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. Dacă consideră eficiente și suficiente propunerile înaintate.

2. Dacă va avea în vedere aceste sugestii în redactarea propunerii sale legislative în domeniu.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(14 iunie 2013)

1. Directiva 2010/21/UE include deja dispoziții specifice care prevăd că statele membre trebuie să se asigure că sunt inițiate programe de monitorizare pentru a verifica expunerea efectivă a albinelor melifere în zone utilizate în mod intensiv de albinele culegătoare. Aceste dispoziții vor rămâne în vigoare, de asemenea, în viitor. Opțiunea de a include zone cultivate cu flori, pentru a oferi un habitat și hrană pentru albine se află la dispoziția agricultorilor. Cu toate acestea, această opțiune nu va exclude posibilitatea de contaminare în derivă din câmpuri adiacente tratate și, prin urmare, riscul pentru albine nu poate fi exclus.

2. Comisia invită distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul oferit de Comisie la întrebarea scrisă E-002933/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003900/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Alternatives to banning neonicotinoid insecticides

The Commission proposed in January suspending the use of three pesticides used for growing sunflowers, maize, rape and cotton for a minimum of two years.

Two suppliers of substances used in agriculture have submitted a plan for improving bee health as an alternative to banning the use of neonicotinoid insecticides. The options proposed include increasing the areas growing flowers in order to provide a habitat and food for bees, as well as establishing a programme for monitoring these insects' health.

Can the Commission specify whether:

1. it considers the proposals put forward as being effective and adequate;

2. it is going to take these suggestions into account when drafting its legislative proposal in this area.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

1. Directive 2010/21/EU already includes specific provisions for Member States to ensure that monitoring programmes are initiated to verify the real exposure of honey bees in areas extensively used by bees for foraging. These provisions will remain in place also in the future. The option to include flowering strips to provide habitat and food for bees is available to farmers. However, this option will not exclude the possibility of drift contamination from treated adjacent fields and therefore the risk for bees cannot be ruled out.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-002933/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003901/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Ordin al Ministerului Sănătății din România

În România, în conformitate cu un ordin al Ministerului Sănătății, persoanelor afectate de autism le este modificat diagnosticul, la împlinirea vârstei de 18 ani, în cel de schizofrenie. Specialiștii afirmă că această încadrare este extrem de nocivă pentru autiști și solicită modificarea ordinului menționat.

În măsura în care deține informații cu privire la acest subiect, Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă această practică corespunde celor mai bune practici în domeniu încurajate la nivel european și, de asemenea, dacă această practică corespunde exigențelor legislației europene cu privire la drepturile omului și la protejarea persoanelor defavorizate.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(6 iunie 2013)

Comisia nu are cunoștință de ordinul emis de Ministerul Sănătății din România la care se face referire în întrebarea parlamentară.

Organizarea, furnizarea și gestionarea asistenței medicale intră în responsabilitatea statelor membre. Prin urmare, Comisia nu are nicio competență pentru a interveni în cazul prezentat.

Comisia, prin programul UE în domeniul sănătății, a cofinanțat o serie de activități privind tulburările din spectrul autismului, cum ar fi proiectul EAIS (*European Autism Information System*) ([1]). Niciuna dintre aceste activități nu se referă la modificarea diagnosticului persoanelor care suferă de tulburări din spectrul autismului la o anumită vârstă, așa cum este menționat în întrebarea parlamentară.

În ceea ce privește protecția drepturilor persoanelor cu handicap, inclusiv a celor care suferă de autism, România este obligată să respecte prevederile Convenției Organizației Națiunilor Unite privind drepturile persoanelor cu handicap, la care România este parte.

([1]) Pentru informații suplimentare, accesați pagina: http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2005/action1/action1_2005_13_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003901/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Order from the Romanian Ministry of Health

In accordance with an Order from the Ministry of Health, persons affected by autism in Romania are having their diagnosis changed, upon reaching 18 years of age, to that of schizophrenia. Experts argue that this situation is extremely harmful to individuals with autism and are calling for the aforementioned Order to be amended.

Insofar as it is informed as regards this matter, the Commission is asked to specify whether this practice meets the best practices in this field promoted at European level and also, whether this practice meets the requirements of EU legislation on human rights and the protection of disadvantaged persons.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission is not aware of an Order by the Ministry of Health of Romania, as referred to in the Parliamentary Question.

The organisation, delivery and management of medical care fall under the responsibility of Member States themselves. The Commission has, therefore, no competence to intervene in the matter described.

The Commission has co-financed a number of activities on autism spectrum disorders, such as the project European Autism Information System (EAIS) ([1]) through the EU-Health Programme. None of these activities related to changes in the diagnosis of people living with autism spectrum disorders at a given age level, as mentioned in the Parliamentary Question.

As regards the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, including autism, Romania is bound by the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which Romania is a party.

([1]) Further information under: http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2005/action1/action1_2005_13_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003902/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Scăderea prețului porumbului la nivel mondial

Prețul porumbului a cunoscut o scădere constantă în ultimele săptămâni, atât la nivel național, cât și la nivel internațional, ca urmare a prăbușirii burselor internaționale, în urma anunțului făcut de SUA, conform căruia americanii au depozite peste estimări.

Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Dacă a estimat impactul acestei scăderi a prețurilor asupra producătorilor UE care au constituit depozite.

2. Dacă a studiat impactul acestei scăderi a prețurilor porumbului asupra formării prețului la carne.

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(28 mai 2013)

La data de 1 martie, stocurile de porumb din SUA au fost cu 8 % mai mari decât previziunile, ceea ce a provocat scăderea prețului porumbului la care se referă distinsul membru. În ciuda acestei evoluții, se preconizează că stocurile finale de porumb vor atinge niveluri foarte scăzute în 2012/13, în timp ce prețurile vor rămâne la un nivel ridicat.

1. Impactul variațiilor de preț asupra producătorilor care dețin stocuri de porumb va depinde de alegerile individuale ale producătorilor și de condițiile contractuale pentru vânzarea stocurilor pe care le dețin. În plus, este puțin probabilă constituirea unor stocuri majore la nivel de producător în 2012/13 ca urmare a creșterii producției atât în UE, cât și în SUA. Angajamentele privind importul de porumb au depășit 9 milioane de tone în 2012/13 până în prezent, de două ori mai mult decât media anilor precedenți. Acest fapt reflectă în mod evident reducerea stocurilor de pe piața UE după scăderea puternică a producției de porumb ca urmare a secetei grave din anul trecut.

2. Însămânțarea porumbului abia a început și, prin urmare, este prea devreme să se indice impactul posibil asupra prețurilor la carne. Consiliul Internațional al Cerealelor preconizează o creștere a producției mondiale de porumb cu 10 % în 2013/2014, atingând 939 de milioane de tone. CIC estimează cererea la 912 milioane de tone, prin urmare stocurile de porumb ar putea crește cu 27 de milioane de tone la sfârșitul perioadei 2013/2014. Aceasta reprezintă o veste bună după deficitul semnificativ înregistrat în anul agricol 2012/13, în special pentru crescătorii de animale. Rămâne de văzut dacă și în ce măsură prețurile la porumb mai scăzute se vor reflecta în prețul cărnii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003902/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Global fall in the price of maize

The price of maize has seen a steady fall over recent weeks, both at a domestic and global level, as a result of the collapse of the international exchanges in the wake of the announcement made by the US, stating that it had higher-than-forecast stocks.

1. Has an assessment been made of the impact of this price drop on the EU producers who have built up stocks?

2. Has the impact been analysed of this drop in maize prices on the pricing of meat?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

On 1 March US maize stocks were 8% higher than what had been forecasted, which has provoked the fall of maize prices to which the Honourable Member refers. Despite this development, maize ending stocks are forecasted to reach very low levels in 2012/13, while prices remain at high levels.

1. Impact of price changes on producers holding maize stocks, will depend on the producers' individual choices and contractual arrangements for sale of their stocks. Furthermore, it is difficult to see any major stock building at producer level in 2012/13 in the light of an increased output both in the EU and the US. Maize import commitments have exceeded 9 million tonnes in 2012/13 so far, more than double of the average of previous years. This clearly reflects the reduced supplies on the EU market following sharp fall of maize production due to the severe drought last year.

2. Maize plantings have just started therefore it is too early to indicate possible impacts on meat prices. The International Grains Council projects world maize output to surge by 10% in 2013/14 reaching 939 million tonnes. IGC puts demand at 912 million tonnes, thus maize stocks could increase by 27 million tonnes by the end of 2013/14. This is good news after the significant deficit situation of the 2012/13 crop year, in particular for animal farmers. Whether and to what extent lower maize prices will be reflected in meat prices remains to be seen.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003903/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Incheierea de acorduri sanitar-veterinare cu state terțe, în vederea sprijinirii producătorilor și procesatorilor de carne de bovine

Procesatorii de carne de bovine și cabaline din România afirmă că, în urma scandalului cărnii de cal, au pierdut cca 20% din exporturi, care au fost anulate. La carnea de cal, livrările la extern s-au redus și cu 50%. În aceste condiții, procesatorii solicită sprijin prin extinderea acordurilor sanitar-veterinare și cu state din afara Uniunii Europene, pentru a exporta pe piețe de interes precum Rusia și Turcia.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze ce acțiuni are în vedere pentru realizarea obiectivelor menționate, precum și pentru încheierea de acorduri sanitar-veterinare cu alte state.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(29 mai 2013)

Exporturile de carne către țări terțe se fac respectând standardele veterinare și sanitare din țările terțe. Standardele ruseşti diferă, uneori considerabil, de cele ale Uniunii Europene. Pentru carnea de cal, UE a negociat recent cu partenerii Uniunii vamale (UV), și anume cu Rusia, Belarus și Kazahstan, un certificat de export armonizat cu condiții specifice pentru țările UE. În plus, furnizorii europeni de carne trebuie să fie pe lista unităților autorizate pentru exportul către partenerii din cadrul Uniunii vamale. Acest lucru trebuie realizat în mod individual de statele membre împreună autoritățile ruse (sau cu autoritățile altor membri ai Uniunii vamale).

De la începutul scandalului cărnii de cal, Comisia a depus multe eforturi pentru a comunica informații actualizate autorităților ruse. S-a subliniat faptul că carnea de cabaline furnizată de România către alte unități, care au etichetat necorespunzător produsele din carne, nu a reprezentat o problemă de siguranță. A fost subliniat faptul că acest tip de carne a fost obținut în mod legal în unități aprobate de UE care nu au fost suspectate de a fi etichetat necorespunzător carnea. Federația Rusă nu a impus restricții la carnea de cabaline sau produsele prelucrate din carne în legătură cu acest caz.

Spre deosebire de sectorul cărnii de vită și al cărnii de ovine, autoritățile turce nu au instituit încă un certificat de import pentru carnea de cal. În prezent, nu există niciun export de carne de cal din UE. Comisia dorește să îmbunătățească accesul cărnii din Uniunea Europeană, inclusiv al cărnii de cal și de vită, pe piața turcă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003903/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Conclusion of sanitary-veterinary agreements with third States to support beef manufacturers and processors.

Following the horse meat scandal, beef and horse meat processors in Romania claim to have lost approximately 20% of exports due to cancellations. Horse meat deliveries abroad have decreased by 50%. In such circumstances, the processors are requesting support through the extension of sanitary-veterinary agreements to non-EU Member States, with a view to exporting to markets of interest such as Russia and Turkey.

The Commission is asked to specify what action it has in mind in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, as well as the conclusion of sanitary-veterinary agreements with other states.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Access to third countries for meat is determined by compliance with third countries veterinary and sanitary standards. Russian standards diverge, sometimes considerably, from those of the EU. For horse meat, the EU has recently negotiated with the partners of the Customs Union (CU), i.e. Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, a harmonised export certificate with specific conditions for EU countries. Additionally, EU suppliers of meat should be on the list of establishments approved for exporting to the CU partners. This is for individual Member States to undertake with the Russian (or other CU members) authorities.

Since the beginning of the horse meat scandal, the Commission has devoted many efforts in communicating updated information to the Russian authorities. It has been underlined that the horse meat provided by Romania to other establishments, which mislabelled meat products, did not represent a safety concern. It was stressed that the meat had been obtained legally in EU approved establishments which were not suspected of having performed any mislabelling. No restrictions were imposed by the Russian Federation on horse meat or processed meat products in relation to that case.

Unlike for beef and ovine meat, the Turkish authorities have not yet established an import certificate for horse meat. There is currently no export of horse meat from the EU. The Commission is seeking to improve the access of EU meat including horse and beef meat to the Turkish market.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003904/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Reluarea de către Turcia a exporturilor de lapte și produse lactate în UE

Autoritățile din Turcia au anunțat recent că vor relua exportul de lapte și produse lactate în Uniunea Europeană, sistate în anul 2006 din cauza nealinierii la standardele europene.

Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Dacă, potrivit verificărilor efectuate de Comisie, Turcia îndeplinește integral standardele UE de calitate, siguranță alimentară și protecție a mediului.

2. Dacă verificările efectuate au avut în vedere aspectele referitoare la bunăstarea animalelor.

3. Dacă a fost instituit un mecanism de verificare permanentă a îndeplinirii constante a acestor criterii.

4. Care este volumul estimat al importurilor din Turcia în sectorul lactatelor și care ar putea fi impactul asupra producătorilor UE, mai ales în contextul apropiatei eliminări a cotelor de lapte.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(31 mai 2013)

Importurile de produse lactate sunt autorizate dacă îndeplinesc condițiile de import referitoare la igienă, sănătatea animală și sănătatea publică stabilite la nivelul UE.

În special, având în vedere situația sănătății animale din Turcia, produsele lactate trebuie să fi fost supuse unui tratament termic care să asigure sterilizarea sau să fi fost produse din lapte crud care a fost supus unui astfel de tratament. În plus, unitățile autorizate să efectueze exporturi trebuie să respecte cerințele de igienă generale și specifice laptelui și cerințele structurale.

În urma ultimului audit al Comisiei efectuat de Oficiul Alimentar și Veterinar și a măsurilor luate ca urmare a recomandărilor sale, garanțiile oferite de Turcia sunt considerate a fi suficiente pentru a adăuga o serie de unități de produse lactate pe lista unităților care îndeplinesc standardele UE, autorizate să exporte în UE.

În context internațional, nu există în prezent posibilitatea de a impune cerințe privind bunăstarea animalelor asupra importurilor de produse lactate.

Ca și în cazul oricărei alte țări care exportă în UE, se vor efectua vizite periodice în Turcia pentru a asigura conformitatea cu normele UE. Sectorul laptelui din Turcia a făcut obiectul a patru audituri specifice între 2006 și 2012.

Deoarece importurile de produse lactate din Turcia nu au fost autorizate până în prezent, nu este posibil să se raporteze volumele din trecut și nici să se ofere o estimare exactă a posibilelor exporturi turce către UE. Cu toate acestea, exporturile vor fi supuse pe deplin taxelor vamale ale UE, cu excepția concesiilor stabilite prin acordurile bilaterale ([1]), ([2]), în special:

— Scutiri de taxe vamale pentru 2 300 de tone de anumite brânzeturi și 3 000 de tone de înghețată;

— O reducere de taxe pentru aceleași brânzeturi, atunci când sunt importate peste cantitatea contingentară.

([1]) Decizia nr. 1/98 a Consiliului de Asociere CE-Turcia din 25 februarie 1998 privind regimul comercial pentru produsele agricole — Protocolul 1 privind regimul preferențial aplicabil importurilor în Comunitate de produse agricole originare din Turcia — Protocolul 2 privind regimul preferențial aplicabil importurilor în Turcia de produse agricole originare din Comunitate — JO L 86, 20.3. 1998, p. 1-38, modificată prin DECIZIA nr. 2/2006 a Consiliului de Asociere CE-Turcia din 17 octombrie 2006 de modificare a protocoalelor 1 și 2 la Decizia nr. 1/98 privind regimul comercial pentru produsele agricole. Contingentele tarifare preferențiale pentru produsele agricole de bază pot fi consultate la adresa: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:22006D0999:EN:NOT

([2]) Decizia nr. 1/2007 a Consiliului de asociere CE-Turcia din 25 iunie 2007 de modificare a concesiilor comerciale pentru produsele agricole transformate care intră sub incidența Deciziei nr. 1/95 a Consiliului de asociere CE-Turcia privind punerea în aplicare a fazei finale a uniunii vamale (…), JO L 202, 31.7.2008, p. 50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003904/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Resumption of milk and dairy product exports from Turkey to the EU

The Turkish authorities recently announced that they would be resuming the export of milk and dairy products to the European Union, which were halted in 2006 due to non-compliance with EU standards.

1. Based on the checks carried out by the Commission, does Turkey fully meet EU standards in terms of quality, food safety and environmental protection?

2. Have the checks carried out taken into account animal welfare factors?

3. Has any mechanism been introduced for permanently verifying ongoing compliance with these criteria?

4. What is the estimated volume of Turkish imports in the dairy sector and what impact might this have on EU producers, especially in light of the imminent abolition of milk quotas?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

Imports of milk products are authorised if they meet the EU hygiene and animal and public health import conditions.

In particular, due to the animal health situation Turkish dairy products must have undergone, or been produced from raw milk which has undergone a heat treatment ensuring sterilisation. In addition, plants authorised to export have to meet the EU general and milk specific hygiene and structural requirements.

Following the last Commission's audit carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office and the actions taken to address its recommendations, the guarantees offered by Turkey are deemed sufficient to add some dairy establishments to the list of EU compliant establishments authorised to export to the EU.

In the international framework, there is currently no legal possibility to impose animal welfare requirements on imports of dairy products.

As in the case of any other country exporting to the EU, Turkey will be regularly visited to ensure EU compliance. The Turkish milk sector was the subject of four specific audits between 2006 and 2012.

Since dairy imports from Turkey have not been allowed so far, it is not possible to report on historical volumes nor to provide a precise estimate of potential Turkish exports to the EU However exports will be subject to full EU tariffs except for the concessions under the bilateral agreements ([1]) ([2]), notably:

— 2 300 tonnes for certain cheese and 3000 tonnes for ice cream at zero duty;

— A reduced duty rate for the same cheese, when imported above the quota quantity.

([1]) Decision No 1/98 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 25 February 1998 on the trade regime for agricultural products — Protocol 1 concerning the preferential regime applicable to the importation into the Community of agricultural products originating in Turkey — Protocol 2 concerning the preferential regime applicable to the importation into Turkey of agricultural products originating in the Community — OJ L 86, 20.3.1998, p. 1-38.
Modified by Decision No 2/2006 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 17 October 2006 amending Protocols 1 and 2 to Decision No 1/98 on the trade regime for agricultural products. You will find the preferential tariff quotas for basic agricultural products.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:22006D0999:EN:NOT

([2]) Decision No 1/2007 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 25 June 2007 amending the trade concessions for processed agricultural products covered by Decision No 1/95 of the EC-Turkey Association Council on implementing the final phase of the Customs Union (…), OJ L 202, 31.7.2008, p. 50.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003905/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Exploatarea eficientă a excesului de energie electrică produsă în statele UE

Pe fondul condițiilor favorabile din această perioadă, sectorul energetic din Bulgaria realizează o producție care depășește de peste două ori consumul și capacitatea de export.

În acest moment, capacitatea de producție a Bulgariei se ridică la 12.000 megawați, dar consumul intern și exportul abia utilizează 5000 megawați.

Având în vedere nivelul ridicat de dependență energetică a UE, Comisia este rugată să precizeze care ar putea fi soluțiile avute în vedere pentru utilizarea eficientă a acestui surplus de energie, la nivelul UE.

Răspuns dat de Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(3 iunie 2013)

Comisia este în legătură cu guvernul Bulgariei pentru a evalua ce tip de reforme ar putea contribui la soluționarea situației la care se referă distinsul membru al Parlamentului. Ar putea fi vorba despre promovarea exporturilor și eliminarea treptată a anumitor unități de producție, în special a celor care nu sunt eficiente din punct de vedere economic și care nu respectă standardele de mediu. Comisia consideră că o mai bună integrare în sistemele de alimentare cu energie electrică din țările învecinate va oferi avantaje Bulgariei. Însă această integrare trebuie să fie precedată de reforme substanțiale în materie de reglementare și piață.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003905/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: The efficient exploitation of excess electricity produced in EU Member States

Amid favourable conditions over this period, the energy sector in Bulgaria is managing to produce more than twice its consumption and export capacity.

Currently, the production capacity of Bulgaria amounts to 12 000 megawatts, however domestic consumption and export barely account for 5 000 megawatts.

Given the high level of energy dependency in the EU, the Commission is asked to specify what solutions could be considered for the efficient use of this surplus energy at EU level.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission is in contact with the Bulgarian Government to assess which reforms could help addressing the situation described by the Honourable Member of Parliament. Such reforms may include the promotion of exports and phasing out of some production facilities, in particular those plants which are economically not efficient and do not comply with environmental standards. The Commission considers that further integration with neighbouring power systems will provide benefits to Bulgaria. However, such enhanced integration must be preceded by substantial regulatory and market reforms.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003906/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Portugal und die Sparmaßnahmen

Das Verfassungsgericht hat das letzte Sparpaket Portugals aufgehoben. Dies bedeutet, dass 1,25 Mrd. EUR an Maßnahmen für dieses Jahr verfassungswidrig sind und die Regierung diesen Betrag anderswo einsparen muss, um die Verpflichtungen der Troika erfüllen zu können.

Gespart wird nun wohl auch beim Bildungs- und beim Gesundheitswesen, was einen Anstieg der Arbeitslosigkeit auf über 18 % erwarten lässt.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Entwicklung dieser Entscheidung für den Euro-Raum beziehungsweise für die Europäische Union?

2. Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission hier nun gegebenenfalls zu ergreifen, um ähnliche Debakel und Desaster wie in Zypern und Griechenland von Anfang an zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2013)

Die portugiesische Regierung hat im April und Anfang Mai 2013 ein umfassendes Maßnahmenpaket beschlossen, um die im Rahmen der siebten Programmüberprüfung vereinbarten Defizitziele, d. h. 5,5 % des BIP für 2013 und 4 % des BIP für 2014, zu erreichen. Wohlgemerkt wurden diese Ziele gegenüber ursprünglich 5 % des BIP für 2013 und 2,5 % des BIP für 2014 bereits heraufgesetzt, um die automatischen Stabilisatoren wirken zu lassen. Das Konsolidierungspaket enthält auch die nötigen Maßnahmen, um die durch das Urteil des portugiesischen Verfassungsgerichts entstandene Haushaltslücke im Jahr 2013 zu schließen.

Die portugiesische Regierung hat also auf die durch das Gerichtsurteil entstandenen Herausforderungen umgehend reagiert und so den Weg für den Abschluss der siebten Programmüberprüfung frei gemacht. Aufgrund dessen haben die Eurogruppe und die Ecofin-Minister zugesagt, die Laufzeiten der EU- und EFSF-Darlehen für Portugal um sieben Jahre zu verlängern. Dies wird die Aussichten Portugals auf einen erfolgreichen Abschluss des Programms erheblich verbessern. Da sich die Programme für Griechenland und Zypern in einer ganz anderen Phase der Umsetzung befinden, lassen sie sich nicht mit dem Programm für Portugal vergleichen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003906/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Portugal and the austerity measures

The Constitutional Court has rejected Portugal's latest austerity package. This means that measures costing EUR 1.25 billion for this year are unconstitutional and the government must save this amount elsewhere in order to be able to meet the obligations imposed by the troika.

Savings will now probably also be made in education and health services, which is expected to increase unemployment to more than 18%.

1. How does the Commission believe this decision will unfold for the euro area and for the European Union?

2. What measures does the Commission now intend to take here, where necessary, in order to avoid from the outset a similar debacle and disaster to those experienced in Cyprus and Greece?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

In April and early May 2013, the Portuguese Government adopted a comprehensive package of measures with the aim of achieving the fiscal targets agreed during the 7th programme review, i.e. 5.5% of GDP in 2013 and 4% of GDP in 2014. It is recalled that these targets had been revised from previously 5% of GDP in 2013 and 2.5% of GDP in 2014 with a view to letting the automatic fiscal stabilisers work. The consolidation package also includes the measures that are necessary to close the fiscal gap in 2013 which the ruling of the Portuguese Constitutional Court had opened.

The Portuguese Government has thus promptly reacted to the challenges posed by the Court ruling thereby paving the way for the conclusion of the 7th programme review. As a consequence, the Eurogroup and Ecofin Finance Ministers have committed to extend the maturities of the EU and EFSF loans to Portugal by seven years. This will significantly enhance Portugal's prospects of a successful completion of the programme. As the programmes for Greece and Cyprus are in very different stages of implementations a comparison with the programme for Portugal is not appropriate.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003907/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. April 2013)

Betrifft: Jugendarbeitslosigkeit steigt und steigt

Mit Ende Februar waren 5,7 Millionen Jugendliche EU-weit ohne Arbeit, dies entspricht einem Viertel der europäischen Jugend.

Seit dem Frühjahr 2011 kann man den dramatischen Aufwärtstrend beobachten, von dem besonders Griechenland und Spanien betroffen sind, wo mehr als jeder zweite Jugendliche arbeitslos ist.

Österreich und Deutschland haben zwar eine Rate unter 10 %, doch steigt hier der Anteil jener in prekären Arbeitsverhältnissen — man nimmt lieber eine solche Arbeit an, als keine zu haben.

Die damit einhergehenden sozialen Probleme — ob arbeitslos oder in prekärem Arbeitsverhältnis — liegen auf der Hand und nehmen drastisch zu.

1. Es wird davon ausgegangen dass der Kommission diese Entwicklung bewusst ist. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Situation der Jugendlichen Europas kurz- und mittelfristig?

2. Welche Strategien verfolgt die Kommission im Detail dazu, um gerade in den Krisenländern die Jugendlichen nicht endgültig zu „verlieren"?

3. Welche Maßnahmen will die Kommission ergreifen beziehungsweise den Mitgliedstaaten nahelegen, um einerseits die Jugendlichen in den Krisenländern gezielt — zumindest sozial — zu unterstützen, andererseits in jenen Ländern, die von der Krise — noch — nicht betroffen sind, deren Jugendliche aber durch die prekären Arbeitsverhältnisse genügend soziale Probleme haben?

(Mit der Bitte um detaillierte und aktuelle Ausführungen.)

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission teilt die von der Frau Abgeordneten vorgenommene Schilderung der prekären Situation der jungen Menschen in Europa. Der Kampf gegen die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit steht auf ihrer Prioritätenliste ganz oben.

So hat die Kommission im Dezember 2012 ein Paket zur Jugendbeschäftigung ([1]) angenommen, um jungen Menschen den Übergang von der Schule ins Erwerbsleben zu erleichtern. Dieses Paket umfasst Folgendes: Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung des Rates zur Einführung einer Jugendgarantie ([2]), Einleitung einer Anhörung der Sozialpartner zu einem Qualitätsrahmen für Praktika ([3]), Ankündigung einer Europäischen Ausbildungsallianz sowie mobilitätsfördernde Maßnahmen.

Im Februar 2013 hat der Europäische Rat beschlossen, die Ziele des Jugendbeschäftigungspakets im Zeitraum 2014-2020 mit 6 Mrd. EUR zu unterstützen. Im April 2013 nahm der Rat eine Empfehlung zur Einführung einer Jugendgarantie auf Grundlage des Kommissionsvorschlags an. Hierin verpflichteten sich die Mitgliedstaaten sicherzustellen, dass allen jungen Menschen unter 25 Jahren binnen vier Monaten nach Verlust einer Arbeit oder dem Verlassen der Schule eine hochwertige Arbeitsstelle oder Weiterbildungsmaßnahme oder ein hochwertiger Ausbildungs- bzw. Praktikumsplatz angeboten wird.

In Bezug auf den Qualitätsrahmen für Praktika entschieden sich die Sozialpartner gegen den Abschluss einer Vereinbarung; daher wird die Kommission bis Ende 2013 ihre eigene Maßnahme vorlegen.

Neben der Empfehlung des Rates zur Einführung einer Jugendgarantie und dem Paket zur Jugendbeschäftigung sorgt die Kommission noch mit weiteren Maßnahmen für die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen und die Ankurbelung des Wachstums.

([1]) KOM(2012)727 endg. vom 5.12.2012.
([2]) KOM(2012)729 endg. vom 5.12.2012.
([3]) KOM(2012)728 endg. vom 5.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003907/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 April 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment continues to rise

At the end of February there were 5.7 million young people out of work throughout the EU, corresponding to a quarter of Europe's young people.

Since the spring of 2011 we have seen a dramatic upward trend, which is affecting Greece and Spain in particular, where more than one in two young people are unemployed.

Although the rate in Austria and Germany is below 10%, the proportion of those in precarious employment is increasing here — people would rather take such jobs than not have one at all.

The resulting social problems — whether someone is unemployed or in precarious employment — are evident, and they are increasing dramatically.

1. I assume the Commission is aware of this development. How does the Commission view the situation of young people in Europe in the short and medium term?

2. Could the Commission provide detailed information on the strategies it is pursuing in order, ultimately, not to 'lose' young people, particularly in the crisis countries?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take, or to urge the Member States to take, in order to support young people in the crisis countries in a targeted way — at least from a social perspective — and also in those countries not — yet — affected by the crisis, but whose young people nevertheless have plenty of social problems as a result of precarious employment?

(Please provide detailed and up-to-date comments.)

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission shares the analysis of the Honourable Member about the precarious situation of young Europeans. Indeed, fighting youth unemployment is a top priority for the European Commission.

To respond to these challenges, the Commission adopted in December 2012 a Youth Employment Package ([1]) to enhance young people's transitions from school to work. The Package included a proposal for a Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee ([2]); the launch of a social partner consultation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships ([3]); the announcement of a European Alliance for Apprenticeships; and actions to support mobility.

The February 2013 European Council decided to allocate 6 billion EUR between 2014-2020 to support the objectives of the Youth Employment Package; and in April 2013 the Council adopted a recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee, based upon the Commission's proposal. Member States committed to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

As for the Quality Framework for Traineeships, since social partners decided not to negotiate a social partner agreement on this subject, the Commission will present its own initiative by the end of 2013.

The Council recommendations on establishing a Youth Guarantee, as well as the Youth Employment Package, are complementary to other efforts by the Commission to boost the number of jobs and to stimulate growth.

([1]) COM(2012) 727 final, 5.12.2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 729 final, 5.12.2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 728 final, 5.12.2012.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003932/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Recuperarea bateriilor mașinilor electrice

Încurajarea conceperii și dezvoltării de noi tehnologii în domeniul automobilelor va determina, în anii următori, apariția unor echipamente noi — respectiv autovehiculele propulsate electric, grație unor baterii speciale concepute în acest sens.

Potrivit estimărilor avansate de experți, o dezvoltare puternică a acestor tipuri de vehicule va avea loc progresiv în deceniul următor. Acestea vor permite reducerea emisiilor de gaze generate prin folosirea actualelor motoare pe bază de motorină și benzină, dar în timp vor determina o serie de probleme de alt gen — stocarea și, mai ales, reciclarea metalelor rare pe care le înglobează.

Cum intenționează Comisia să încurajeze statele membre să instituie un parteneriat public-privat pentru dezvoltarea, încă din această fază, a unor tehnologii specifice de recuperare a metalelor rare din componența bateriilor de la autovehiculele electrice și hibride?

Răspuns dat de dna Geoghegan-Quinn în numele Comisiei
(27 mai 2013)

Inițiativa europeană privind autovehiculele ecologice a luat în considerare, încă de la început, problema importantă ridicată, pe bună dreptate, de distinsa membră în întrebarea sa. Cererile de propuneri în acest domeniu au subliniat în mod constant importanța recuperării pământurilor rare și a altor materiale valoroase cum ar fi litiul, din baterii și motoare electrice (în ai căror magneți sunt utilizate, de asemenea, astfel de materiale), precum și a reducerii la minimum a utilizării lor.

În plus, refolosirea bateriilor a căror performanță s-a degradatat sub pragul necesar pentru întrebuințarea la autovehicule (aproximativ 80 %), dar care ar fi în continuare adecvate pentru stocarea fixă de energie, este avută în vedere, de asemenea, în anumite proiecte referitoare la uzarea bateriilor. În sfârșit, evaluarea ciclului de viață (LCA - Life Cycle Assessment) face parte din direcțiile de cercetare în noua chimie.

Ca exemple concrete, proiectul SOMABAT ([1]) analizează modul în care deșeurile organice pot fi folosite ca precursori pentru materiale pe bază de carbon destinate bateriilor, acordându-se o atenție deosebită evaluării ciclului de viață (LCA) și reciclării. Proiectele AUTOSUPERCAP ([2]) și AMELIE ([3]) includ, de asemenea, evaluări complete ale ciclului de viață (LCA).

La un nivel mai general, activitățile de cercetare și dezvoltare în domeniul tehnologiilor industriale vor explora din ce în ce mai mult „economia circulară", și anume organizarea procesului de fabricație în jurul reciclării complete a componentelor organice și anorganice ale mărfurilor. Această abordare va fi continuată în activitățile viitoare privind bateriile, în contextul parteneriatului contractual între sectorul public și cel privat în legătură cu Inițiativa europeană privind autovehiculele ecologice, parteneriat ce urmează să fie propus în cadrul programului Orizont 2020, următorul program-cadru al UE pentru cercetare și inovare.

([1]) http://somabat1.ite.es/

([2]) http://autosupercap.eps.surrey.ac.uk/

([3]) http://www.green-cars-initiative.eu/projects/projects/amelie

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003932/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Recovery of electric car batteries

Encouraging the design and development of new technologies for cars will result, in the years ahead, in the appearance of new machines, specifically electrically driven cars, powered by special batteries designed for this purpose.

According to the estimates made by experts, the next decade will gradually see a strong upsurge in these kinds of vehicles. They will help cut gas emissions generated by the engines currently being used, running on diesel and petrol. However, over time, they will give rise to a number of problems of a different kind, relating to the storage and, in particular, the recycling of the rare metals contained in them.

How does the Commission intend to encourage Member States to initiate a public-private partnership aimed at developing, right from this stage, technologies specifically designed to recover the rare metals featuring in the composition of electric and hybrid car batteries?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The European Green Cars Initiative has considered from the start the important issue that the Honourable Member's question rightly raises. Calls for proposals in this area have consistently stressed the importance of recovering rare earths and other valuable materials like lithium from batteries and electric motors (in whose magnets such materials are also used); and of reducing their use to a minimum.

In addition, the reutilisation of batteries, the performance of which has degraded below the threshold needed for automotive use (around 80%), but which would still be suitable for stationary energy storage, is also being considered in some projects dealing with ageing. Finally, life-cycle assessment (LCA) is part of research on new chemistry.

As concrete examples, the SOMABAT project ([1]) explores how to use bio waste as a precursor for carbon-based battery materials paying extensive attention to LCA and recycling. The AUTOSUPERCAP ([2]) and AMELIE ([3]) projects also include complete LCAs.

More generally, Research and Development in industrial technologies will increasingly explore the 'circular economy' i.e. the organisation of manufacturing around the full recycling of organic and non-organic components of goods. This approach would be pursued in future work on batteries within the context of the European Green Vehicle Initiative contractual Public-Private Partnership to be proposed under Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

([1]) http://somabat1.ite.es/
([2]) http://autosupercap.eps.surrey.ac.uk/
([3]) http://www.green-cars-initiative.eu/projects/projects/amelie

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003933/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(9. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Pienpuhdistamojen CE-merkintä EN 12566-3 standardin mukaisesti

Pienpuhdistamoiden CE-merkinnän edellytyksenä on, että tuote täyttää sitä koskevan eurooppalaisen tuotestandardin (EN 12566-3) vaatimukset.

Käsityksemme mukaan Suomessa CE-merkissä esitetään standardin ohjeistuksesta poiketen kolme erilaista puhdistustehokkuuden testaukseen liittyvää lukua:

1. Orgaaninen mitoituskuorma (BOD7) g/d, esim. 0,25 kg/d

2. Hydraulinen mitoitusvirtaama 0,6 m3/d

3. Puhdistustehokkuus testatulla orgaanisella kuormalla (BOD7) 0,16 kg/d.

Ensimmäinen lukuarvo kohdassa 1, 0,25 kg/d orgaaninen mitoituskuorma, ei käsityksemme mukaan perustu EN 12566-3 standardiin eikä sen perusteella saatuihin puhdistustehokkuuden testaustuloksiin. Kyseinen orgaanisen mitoituskuorman lukuarvo 0,25 kg/d on Suomessa käytetyissä CE-merkeissä poikkeuksetta merkitty suuremmaksi verrattuna EN standardin 12566-3 mukaisessa testissä käytettyyn todelliseen orgaaniseen kuormituslukuun. Suomalaiset suunnittelijat määrittelevät puhdistamon puhdistustehon juuri tuon luvun perusteella eli kuinka monen asukkaan jätevedet puhdistamo kykenee puhdistamaan.

Kun laitevalmistajat ilmoittavat CE-merkissä merkittävästi suurempia mitoitusarvoja kuin standardin mukaisissa testeissä käytetyt arvot, siitä seuraa epäreilu kilpailutilanne, jossa laitteen hintakilpailukykyä parannetaan lupaamalla todellisuutta suurempaa puhdistuskapasiteettia muiden valmistajien laitteisiin nähden.

Perustuuko Suomen sallima orgaanisen mitoituskuorman BOD7 lukuarvo kohdassa 1 standardiin EN 12566-3 ja millä perusteella kyseisen orgaanisen mitoituskuorman BOD7 lukuarvo voi olla merkittävästi suurempi kuin standardin mukaisessa testissä orgaanisena mitoituskuormana käytetty arvo? Voiko toimintamalli estää muiden eurooppalaisten valmistajien markkinoille tuloa ja vääristää kilpailua?

Antonio Tajanin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(31. toukokuuta 2013)

Eurooppalaisen standardin EN 12566-3 lausekkeen 6.1.4 mukaan saastekuorman (esim. orgaanisen mitoituskuorman) määrittämiseen voidaan käyttää kansallisia määräyksiä. Tämä tarkoittaa sitä, että jäsenvaltio voi määrittää kuorman, joka on otettava huomioon sen alueelle perustettavan puhdistuslaitoksen koosta päätettäessä.

Puhdistustehon määrityksessä on kuitenkin noudatettava standardin määräyksiä. Kansallisia testaus-/arviointimenetelmiä ei sallita, koska – kuten direktiivissä 89/106/ETY säädetään –, panemalla täytäntöön yhdemukaistetun EN-standardin kukin jäsenvaltio suostuu saattamaan puhdistamon tehon määrittämisessä käytettävät kansalliset sääntönsä EN-standardiin sisältyvien sääntöjen mukaisiksi.

Valmistaja on joka tapauksessa vastuussa ilmoittamastaan tehosta. Sen on standardin mukaisesti voitava dokumentoida ilmoituksensa testien pohjalta. Markkinavalvontaviranomaisilla (ja asiakkailla) on oikeus pyytää valmistajaa perustelemaan ilmoituksensa. Asianmukaisesti toimivan markkinavalvontaprosessin olisi yhdessä seuraamusten kanssa estettävä valmistajia tekemästä vilpillisiä ilmoituksia.

Yhdenmukaistettu eurooppalainen standardi, joka on suoritustasoa koskeva standardi, mahdollistaa näin ollen sen, että kussakin tapauksessa voidaan valita vaaditun tehon kannalta asianmukainen puhdistuslaitos. Tällä tavoin eurooppalainen standardi edistää kilpailua.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003933/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: The CE mark for small sewage plants in accordance with Standard EN 12566-3

A requirement of the CE mark for small sewage plants is that the plant meets the relevant requirements of European Standard EN 12566-3.

As far as we understand, in Finland the CE mark gives three different figures for how treatment efficiency is tested:

1. Nominal organic load (BOD7) g/d, e.g., 0.25 kg/d

2. Nominal hydraulic flow 0.6 m^3/d

3. Treatment efficiency of a tested organic load (BOD7) 0.16 kg/d.

The first value (point 1) of a nominal organic daily load of 0.25 kg/d is not, as we see it, based on Standard EN 12566-3 and the treatment efficiency test results obtained with reference to it. The figure of 0.25 kg/d for nominal organic load in the CE marks used in Finland is, without exception, recorded as greater than the figure for actual organic load used in the test in accordance with EN Standard 12566-3. Finnish designers determine a sewage plant's treatment efficiency precisely with reference to that figure, which is to say in reference to the number of residents whose waste water the plant is able to treat.

When the manufacturers of equipment indicate significantly greater rated values in CE marks than those used in tests in accordance with a standard, the result is unfair competition, boosting the price competitiveness of equipment with the promise of greater treatment capacity than that offered by other manufacturers, but which is, in fact, an exaggeration.

Is the value for nominal organic load BOD7 in point 1, which is permitted by Finland, based on Standard EN 12566-3 and what is the reason for it being significantly greater than that for nominal organic load in the test in accordance with the Standard? Might the model used prevent other European manufacturers from accessing the market and distort competition?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The European Standard EN 12566-3 lays down in clause 6.1.4 that national regulations may be used to determine the pollution load (e.g. BOD load). This means that a Member State may determine the load to be taken into account for sizing the treatment plant to be installed in its territory.

The determination of the treatment efficiency, however, must follow the provisions of the standard. National test/assessment methods are not permitted since, as stated in Directive 89/106/EEC, by implementing the harmonised EN, each Member State agrees to align its national rules for determining the plant efficiency to the rules included in the EN standard.

In any case, the manufacturer is responsible for the efficiency performance he declares. He must be able to document his declaration on the basis of tests, in line with the standard. Market surveillance authorities (and clients) are entitled to ask the manufacturer to justify its declaration. The correct functioning of market surveillance processes, combined with penalties, should prevent manufacturers from making fraudulent declarations.

Therefore, the harmonised European Standard, being a performance standard, allows for the correct treatment plant to be chosen for the efficiency required in each particular case. By doing so, the European standard stimulates competition.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003934/13
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(9. april 2013)

Om: Principielle udfordringer for kosttilskud

Den danske branche for kosttilskud, der reguleres af et omfattende lovgivningskompleks ([1]), oplever kritisabel administrativ praksis og uacceptable handelshindringer for import og salg af sine produkter.

Når en urt har været forhandlet i EU før maj 1997, er sikkerhedsvurderet og tilladt i et andet EU-land, kan Danmark ikke lovligt lægge handelshindringer i vejen eller anvende forsigtighedsprincippet til at forbyde den. Dette sker alligevel konstant over for kosttilskudsbranchen.

Selvom man kan påvise, at de pågældende urter er sikkerhedsvurderet og bliver solgt lovligt i andre EU-lande, anerkender de danske myndigheder ikke lovligheden af visse produkter, uanset modsatrettet dokumentation, som den danske importør kan fremlægge fra udenlandske producenter, eksperter eller myndigheder. Varerne er ikke farlige i sig selv, men importørerne oplever alligevel krav om at destruere produkter, der gerne må sælges i andre lande. De må altså ikke engang sende dem tilbage til det land, de har importeret dem fra.

Kan Kommissionen henvise til retsgrundlaget, der muliggør et krav om, at lande pålægger importører og behandlere at destruere deres varelager?

For visse urteprodukter har Danmark udstedt forbud, skønt samme produkter er godkendt i andre EU-lande. Hvad er retsgrundlaget for at lægge handelshindringer for sådanne produkter, når det principielt strider mod lovgivningen i EU at gøre det?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(12. juni 2013)

Det ærede medlem stiller spørgsmål om kosttilskud, som er blevet sikkerhedsvurderet og lovligt forhandles i andre medlemsstater.

Direktiv 2002/46/EF ([2]) indeholder harmoniserede regler for mærkning af kosttilskud og indfører specifikke regler for brug vitaminer og mineraler i kosttilskud. Reglerne for brug af andre stoffer end vitaminer og mineraler i kosttilskud, f.eks. plante- eller urteekstrakt, er ikke harmoniseret og er derfor omfattet af nationale regler under hensyntagen til traktatens bestemmelser. I henhold til forordning (EF) nr. 178/2002 ([3]) håndhæver medlemsstaterne fødevarelovgivningen samt overvåger og kontrollerer, at lederne af fødevare- og foderstofvirksomheder overholder de relevante krav i fødevarelovgivningen. Det hedder endvidere i forordningen, at fødevarer ikke må markedsføres, hvis de er farlige.

Det skal bemærkes, at der er behov for yderligere oplysninger om bestemte produkter for at foretage en nøjagtig vurdering. Når dette er sagt, er produkter, som allerede forhandles lovligt i en medlemsstat og ikke er underlagt afledt EU-lovgivning (forordninger, direktiver mv.) i princippet omfattet af princippet om gensidig anerkendelse. I henhold til dette princip er der, hvis produktet allerede er lovligt fremstillet og/eller forhandles i en medlemsstat, ingen gyldig grund til ikke at indføre produktet i en anden medlemsstat, medmindre denne medlemsstat begrunder den pågældende restriktion.

([1]) bl.a. kosttilskudsdirektivet, Novel Food forordningen samt forordningen om ernærings- og sundhedsanprisninger.
([2]) Direktiv 2002/46/EF af om indbyrdes tilnærmelse af medlemsstaternes lovgivninger om kosttilskud.
([3]) Forordning (EF) nr. 178/2002 om generelle principper og krav i fødevarelovgivningen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003934/13
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Fundamental challenges for food supplements

The Danish food supplements industry, which is regulated by an extensive set of legislation ([1]), experiences deplorable administrative practices and unacceptable barriers to trade in connection with the import and sale of its products.

If a herb was marketed in the EU prior to May 1997, has undergone a safety assessment and is permitted in another EU Member State, Denmark cannot lawfully place barriers to trade in its way or use the precautionary principle to prohibit it. This is nevertheless happening to the food supplements industry all the time.

Even if it can be demonstrated that the herbs in question have been assessed as safe and are legally sold in other EU Member States, the Danish authorities do not recognise the legal status of these products, irrespective of documentation which the Danish importer can present from foreign producers, experts or authorities proving that they are legal. The products are not inherently dangerous, but the importers nevertheless get asked to destroy products that can freely be sold in other countries. They are not even allowed to send them back to the country from which they have imported them.

Can the Commission indicate the legal basis which allows for a requirement for Member States to order importers and processors to destroy their stock?

Denmark has prohibited certain herb products, despite the fact that these same products are approved in other EU Member States. What is the legal basis for placing barriers to trade in the way of such products, when doing so, in principle, contravenes EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to food supplements which have undergone safety assessments and are lawfully marketed in other Member States.

Directive 2002/46/EC ([2]) establishes harmonised rules for the labelling of food supplements and introduces specific rules on vitamins and minerals in food supplements. Rules for substances other than vitamins and minerals used in food supplements, e.g. plants/ herbal extracts, are not harmonised and therefore are governed by national rules, without prejudice to the provisions of the Treaty. In that context, according to Regulation (EC) 178/2002 ([3]), Member States shall enforce food law, monitor and verify that the relevant requirements of food law are fulfilled by food business operators. This regulation also stipulates that food shall not be placed on the market if it is unsafe.

It should be pointed out that further information on the exact product is needed in order to carry out a precise assessment. Be that as it may, in general, products already lawfully marketed in a Member State and not subject to secondary EC laws (Regulations, Directives etc.) are governed by the principle of mutual recognition. Under this principle there is no valid reason why, provided that a product has been lawfully manufactured and/or marketed in another Member State, it should not be introduced into any other Member State unless the Member State justifies the restriction in question.

([1]) For example the Food Supplements Directive, the Novel Food Regulation and the regulation on nutrition and health claims made on foods.
([2]) Directive 2002/46/EC on the approximation of the laws of Member States relating to food supplements.
([3]) Regulation (EC) 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003935/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Caracol manzana

La medida agroambiental incluida en el PDR de Cataluña «Gestión de los humedales incluidos en el Convenio Ramsar: mejora de la calidad medioambiental de las aguas y de las tierras dedicadas al cultivo del arroz y retirada de la paja del arroz» (MAG 331_1), tiene como compromiso básico el mantener inundada la superficie de cultivo al menos cuatro meses adicionales, durante el otoño-invierno, en las zonas tradicionales y/o limítrofes a las lagunas. La Comisión, a través del artículo 5 de la Decisión de ejecución 2012/697/UE de la Comisión, de 8 de noviembre de 2012, relativa a las medidas para evitar la introducción en la Unión y la propagación en el interior de la misma del género Pomacea (Perry) [notificada con el número C(2012) 7803], obliga a los Estados miembros a tomar todas las medidas necesarias para la erradicación del organismo especificado. La autoridad competente en Cataluña ha realizado ensayos sobre diferentes métodos de control del caracol manzana y ha concluido siempre, hasta el momento, que el secado de las parcelas de arroz es el método más efectivo de control (del 87 % en la campaña 2010/11 y del 85 % en la 2011/12), y resulta imprescindible para evitar su expansión (ver ficha de la plaga de la Generalitat de Cataluña). Asímismo, el artículo 47 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1974/2006 de la Comisión, de 15 de diciembre de 2006, por el que se establecen disposiciones de aplicación del Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005 del Consejo relativo a la ayuda al desarrollo rural a través del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader), indica que los Estados miembros podrán reconocer casos de fuerza mayor o circunstancias excepcionales en los que renunciarán al reembolso total o parcial de la ayuda recibida por el beneficiario.

En el caso que de acuerdo con lo establecido por la Decisión de Ejecución 2012/697/UE, la autoridad competente establezca, como medida obligatoria de lucha para la erradicación del caracol manzana, la obligación de realizar el secado de las parcelas de arroz y, a la vez de que, haya productores de arroz sujetos a los compromisos agroambientales de mantener inundada la superficie de cultivo al menos cuatro meses adicionales, establecidos por la medida «Gestión de los humedales incluidos en el Convenio Ramsar: mejora de la calidad medioambiental de las aguas y de las tierras dedicadas al cultivo del arroz y retirada de la paja del arroz» (MAG 331_1), ¿considera la Comisión que esta situación puede ser reconocida por la autoridad competente en desarrollo rural del Estado miembro como causa de fuerza mayor o circunstancia excepcional, de acuerdo con lo establecido en el artículo 47 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1974/2006?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de abril de 2013)

El reconocimiento de una situación particular como causa de fuerza mayor o circunstancia excepcional que elimina la obligación de reembolsar total o parcialmente la ayuda recibida por los beneficiarios compete a los Estados miembros. El artículo 47 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1974/2006 ([1]) establece una lista de casos que pueden ser considerados por los Estados miembros causas de fuerza mayor o circunstancias excepcionales. Con todo, dicha lista no es exhaustiva y no está excluido, *a priori*, que la aparición repentina de una plaga como el caracol manzana pueda considerarse una circunstancia excepcional a los efectos del artículo 47 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1974/2006.

Los casos de fuerza mayor o de circunstancias excepcionales deben ser notificados por escrito a la autoridad competente, por el beneficiario o su derechohabiente, adjuntando las pruebas pertinentes a satisfacción de dicha autoridad, en el plazo de diez días hábiles a partir de la fecha en que el beneficiario o su derechohabiente esté en condiciones de hacerlo.

([1]) DO L 368 de 23.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003935/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Island apple snail

Keeping traditional rice growing areas and/or areas bordering the lagoons flooded for at least an additional four months during the autumn to winter period is a basic requirement of agri-environmental measures in Catalonia's rural development programme (RDP) 'Management of the wetlands listed in the RAMSAR Convention: improving the environmental quality of water and land given over to rice growing and removal of rice straw' ['Gestión de los humedales incluidos en el Convenio RAMSAR: mejora de la calidad medioambiental de las aguas y de las tierras dedicadas al cultivo del arroz y retirada de la paja del arroz' (MAG 331_1)].

Article 5 of Commission Implementing Decision 2012/697/EU of 8 November 2012 as regards measures to prevent the introduction into and the spread within the Union of the genus Pomacea (Perry) (notified under document C(2012) 7803) requires Member States to take all necessary measures to eradicate said organism. The competent authority in Catalonia has tested different methods of controlling the island apple snail and has always until now found that drying out the rice paddies is the most effective means of control (87% in the 2010/2011 season and 85% in the 2011/2012 season). It has concluded that this is essential if the pest is to be prevented from spreading (see the Catalan Regional Government's pest fact sheet). Moreover, Article 47 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 of 15 December 2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) states that Member States may recognise cases of *force majeure* or exceptional circumstances in which they will not require the partial or full reimbursement of aid received by the beneficiary.

In the event that the competent authority does make the drying out of rice paddies a compulsory measure in its efforts to eradicate the island apple snail in accordance with Implementing Decision 2012/697/EU, rice producers may at the same time find themselves obliged to keep their growing areas flooded for at least an additional four months under the agri-environmental measures in the RDP 'Management of the wetlands listed in the RAMSAR Convention: improving the environmental quality of water and land given over to rice growing and removal of rice straw' (MAG 331_1).

Does the Commission consider that said situation can be recognised by the Member State's competent authority for rural development as a case of *force majeure* or exceptional circumstances, in accordance with Article 47 of Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The recognition of a particular situation as a category of *force majeure* or exceptional circumstances which would eliminate the requirement of the partial or full reimbursement of aid received by the beneficiaries falls under the responsibility of the Member States. Article 47 of Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 ([1]) establishes a list of cases which may be considered by Member States as categories of *force majeure* or exceptional circumstances. However that list is not exhaustive and it is not a priori excluded that a sudden appearance of a certain pest, like the island apple snail, could be considered as an exceptional circumstance in the sense of Article 47 of Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006.

Cases of *force majeure* or exceptional circumstances should be notified in writing by the beneficiary, or any person entitled through or under him to the competent authority, together with relevant evidence to the satisfaction of that authority, within 10 working days from the date on which the beneficiary, or the person entitled through or under him, is in a position to do so.

([1]) OJ L 368, 23.12.2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003936/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Budgetpolitik USA – EU

Die „Schuldenpolitik" der USA, die trotz steigender Ausgaben und unter anderem weiteren Geld-Druckens, ihr Defizit nach wie vor nicht in den Griff zu bekommen scheinen, hat bis dato weder die Wirtschaft signifikant verbessert noch annähernde Vollbeschäftigung erreicht.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Auswirkungen sowohl direkt als auch indirekt auf die Wirtschaft der Europäischen Union?

In der EU wurde notwendigerweise eine „Sparpolitik" als Antwort auf die in den USA ausgelöste Krise installiert. Es stellt sich die Frage, wie lange der stetig ansteigende Schuldenstand der USA, welcher im Vergleich zum BIP höher als der der Eurozone ist, auch in der Tat noch finanzierbar sein kann.

2. Wie weit ist/wäre die EU beziehungsweise der Euroraum für eine allfällige weitere Krise aus den USA gerüstet, diese „abzuwehren"?

2a. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Auswirkungen auf die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten beziehungsweise auf die Krisenländer konkret ein?

(Mit der Bitte um detaillierte Ausführungen.)

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

Die US-amerikanische Wirtschaft erholt sich allmählich. Für 2013 rechnet die Kommission mit einem Anstieg des realen BIP um 1,9 %, im Jahr 2014 um 2,6 %. Dies wird vor allem über den Handel die Wirtschaft in der EU stimulieren. Die Auswirkungen auf die einzelnen Länder werden in hohem Maße von der Intensität der Handels- und Investitionsbeziehungen zu den USA abhängen.

Durch die Reform des Finanzdienstleistungssektors und die Stärkung der Finanzaufsicht konsolidiert die EU ihre Wirtschafts- und Finanzarchitektur weiter. Somit ist die EU jetzt besser auf externe Schocks vorbereitet, auch wenn sie von den USA ausgehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003936/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: USA — EU budgetary policy

The 'debt policy' of the USA, which, despite increasing expenditure and printing more money, does not yet seem to have its deficit under control, has not significantly improved the economy to date, nor has it achieved anything near full employment.

1. How does the Commission assess the direct and indirect impact on the economy of the European Union?

An 'austerity policy' was introduced in the EU as a necessary response to the crisis triggered in the USA. The question remains how long the continuously spiralling debts of the USA, which are higher than those of the euro area when compared with GDP, can actually be sustained.

2. How well equipped are the EU and the euro area to 'fend off' another possible crisis from the USA?

2a. How does the Commission assess the specific impact on the individual Member States and on the crisis countries?

(Please provide detailed comments.)

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The US economy continues to recover gradually and the Commission predicts real GDP to expand by 1.9% in 2013 and 2.6% in 2014. This will have a positive effect on the EU economy, in particular through the trade channel. The impact on specific countries will be largely dependent on the importance of trade and investment links with the US.

The EU continues to strengthen its economic and financial architecture, in particular through the reform of the financial services sector and the strengthening of financial supervision. Therefore, the EU is now better prepared to address external shocks, including those that could come from the US.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003937/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Kann die EU sich die weiteren Beitrittskandidaten überhaupt „leisten"

Angesichts der schwer wiegenden Krise, in der sich die Europäische Union und insbesondere der Euroraum befinden, ist eine höchst differenzierte Sichtweise auf mögliche und notwendige Lehren aus den Erfahrungen der Beitritte beispielsweise Griechenlands oder Zyperns angebracht. Es stellt sich die Frage, inwieweit — unter Berücksichtigung des knapp bemessenen EU-Budgets sowie der Erfahrungen aus der Krise — mit den weiteren Beitrittskandidaten „vorsichtiger" umgegangen werden sollte.

1. Welche Einschätzungen hat die Kommission aufgrund der ihr vorliegenden Informationen bezüglich Serbien und Montenegro?

2. Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass hier ähnliche Erfahrungen wie im Falle des Beitritts von Griechenland gemacht werden?

3. Welche Auswirkungen haben diese Beitritte konkret auf die Budgets der Staaten Mittel- und Nordeuropas? Können diese noch finanziert werden, ohne dass diese zu weiteren Belastungen der Bürger führen?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(6. Juni 2013)

Sowohl Montenegro als auch Serbien sind Kandidatenländer. Die Beitrittsverhandlungen mit Montenegro wurden im Juni 2012 eingeleitet. Die Aufnahme von Beitrittsverhandlungen mit Serbien wurde angesichts der von dem Land erzielten Fortschritte in einem gemeinsamen Bericht der Kommission und der Hohen Vertreterin der Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik empfohlen, der am 22. April 2013 verabschiedet wurde.

Der vom Europäischen Rat gebilligte erneuerte Konsens über die Erweiterung stellt nach wie vor die Grundlage für die Erweiterungspolitik der EU dar. Bei der Formulierung dieser Politik, die unter anderem die grundsätzliche Anwendung fairer und strikter Bedingungen vorsieht, werden die Erfahrungen aus früheren Beitritten berücksichtigt. Zu den Bedingungen gehören die 1993 vom Europäischen Rat in Kopenhagen festgelegten wirtschaftlichen Kriterien, denen zufolge ein Land der EU nur beitreten kann, wenn es über eine funktionierende Marktwirtschaft und die Fähigkeit verfügt, dem Wettbewerbsdruck und den Marktkräften innerhalb der Union standhalten zu können. Die Kommission überwacht die Fortschritte der betreffenden Länder und berichtet in ihren jährlichen Fortschrittsberichten darüber.

Wie sich der Beitritt der betreffenden Länder auf den Haushalt auswirkt, hängt von den finanziellen Gegebenheiten in der EU zum Zeitpunkt des Beitritts sowie von den Ergebnissen der Beitrittsverhandlungen ab. Jedenfalls möchte die Kommission betonen, dass der Beitritt eines neuen Mitgliedstaats nicht nur haushaltspolitischen Belang hat, sondern mit weiterreichenden Auswirkungen und Vorteilen verbunden ist, beispielsweise in Bezug auf Stabilität, Sicherheit und die Zunahme des Handels.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003937/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Can the EU 'afford' the new accession candidate countries

In view of the serious crisis affecting the European Union and the euro area in particular, it would be appropriate to take a highly differentiated approach to the possible and necessary lessons learned from the accession of Greece or Cyprus, for example. The question arises of the extent to which a 'more cautious' approach should be adopted to new accession candidate countries in view of the tight EU budget and the lessons learned from the crisis.

1. Based on the information available to it, what is the Commission's assessment concerning Serbia and Montenegro?

2. Can the Commission rule out the possibility of experiences similar to those resulting from the accession of Greece?

3. What is the specific impact of these accessions on the budgets of the countries of Central and Northern Europe? Can these still be financed without placing an even greater burden on citizens?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Montenegro and Serbia are both candidate countries. Accession negotiations with Montenegro were launched in June 2012. On 22 April 2013 the Commission and the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy adopted a joint report, recommending, in view of the progress achieved, the opening of accession negotiations with Serbia.

The renewed enlargement consensus, agreed by the European Council, remains the basis for the EU's enlargement policy. This policy is, *inter alia*, based on principles of fair and rigorous conditionality and is developed taking into account lessons learned from previous accessions. The relevant conditions include the economic criteria defined by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, which prescribe that to join the EU, a country must have a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. The Commission monitors the progress made by the countries involved and reports on this in its annual Progress Reports.

The budgetary implications of the accession of the countries concerned will depend on the prevailing financial arrangements in the EU at the time of their joining, as well as on the results of the eventual accession negotiations. In any case, the Commission underlines that the accession of a new member state is not only a budgetary exercise, but also has a wider impact and benefits in terms of, for example, stability, security and increased trade.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003938/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfrage bezüglich der Anfrage E-007466/2012

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage zu den Regionen Valencia und Murcia hat die Kommission erläutert, dass für die Region Murcia „die Gefahr einer Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen in Höhe von etwa 10 Mio. EUR" bestehe, für die Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen im Fall von Valencia handele es sich dabei um ca. 21 Mio. EUR.

1. Ist die Aufhebung der Mittelbindungen für beide Regionen durchgeführt worden?

1.1. Wenn nein, wurde die Auszahlung der genannten Beträge bis zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt abgeschlossen?

Hinsichtlich des Landwirtschaftsfonds beschrieb die Kommission, dass im Jahr 2012 die Ausführungsrate der Region Murcia hier 37 % beträgt, weshalb die Gefahr einer Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen besteht.

2. Wurden die Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen des Landwirtschaftsfonds hinsichtlich der Region Murcia durchgeführt?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2013)

1. Für das Jahr 2010 gab es in Valencia und Murcia keine Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung.

Für das Programm Murcia wurden für 2010 insgesamt 341 Mio. EUR gebunden. Für das Programm Valencia wurden für 2010 insgesamt 896 Mio. EUR gebunden.

Bis Mai 2013 hat Murcia Zahlungen in Höhe von insgesamt 343 Mio. EUR erhalten. Valencia hat Zahlungen in Höhe von insgesamt 886 Mio. EUR erhalten. Bei Valencia entspricht die Differenz zwischen dem gebundenen und dem ausgezahlten Betrag den von der Region eingereichten Großprojekten.

2. In Bezug auf den Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER) hat die Kommission das Verfahren des Artikels 29 Absatz 1 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1290/2005 ([1]) für das Programm zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums 2007-2013 in Valencia eingeleitet. Dies bedeutet, dass der Teil einer Mittelbindung für ein Programm zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums, der nicht bis Dezember des zweiten auf das Jahr der Mittelbindung folgenden Jahres verwendet wird, automatisch aufgehoben wird. Im Fall von Valencia ist ein Betrag von 5 440 082 EUR aufzuheben, der dem Teil der Mittelbindungen für das Jahr 2010 entspricht, der nicht bis Dezember 2012 verwendet wurde. Die Region Murcia hat dagegen die gesamten bis 2010 gebundenen ELER-Mittel vor Ende 2012 ausgeschöpft. Daher erfolgt keine Aufhebung von Mittelbindungen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1290/2005 des Rates vom 21. Juni 2005 über die Finanzierung der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik, ABl. L 209 vom 11.8.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003938/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Supplementary question concerning Question E-007466/2012

In its answer to the question relating to the regions of Valencia and Murcia, the Commission stated that 'there is currently a risk of decommitment of about EUR 10 million' for the region of Murcia, while the risk of decommitment in the case of Valencia is approximately EUR 21 million.

1. Has decommitment already taken place for the two regions in question?

1.1. If not, have the relevant sums already been paid out by now?

In relation to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the Commission stated that the execution rate in the region of Murcia in 2012 was 37%, which is why the risk of decommitment exists.

2. Has decommitment already taken place in relation to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development for the region of Murcia?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

1. There was no decommitment of funds from the European Regional Development Fund in Valencia and Murcia for 2010.

The committed amount for the Murcia programme for 2010 was EUR 341 million. The committed amount for the Valencia programme for 2010 was EUR 896 million.

By May 2013, Murcia has received total payments of EUR 343 million. Valencia has received total payments of EUR 886 million. For Valencia, the difference between the amount committed and paid is accounted for by the major projects submitted by the region.

2. In relation to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the Commission has started the procedure laid down in Article 29(1) of Council Regulation 1290/2005 ([1]) for the 2007-2013 Valencia Rural Development Programme. This means that any portion of a budget commitment for a rural development programme that has not been used by December of the second year following that of the budget commitment is automatically decommitted. In the case of Valencia, an amount of EUR 5 440 082, corresponding to the budget committed in 2010 will be decommitted since it was not used by December 2012. The region of Murcia, on the contrary, spent the total EAFRD amount committed up to 2010 before the end of 2012. Therefore no decommitment will take place.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005, of 21 June 2005, on the financing of the common agricultural policy, OJ L 209, 11.8.2005, p.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003939/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfrage zur Anfrage E-007467/2012

Die Kommission hat in ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage zur drohenden Pleite Siziliens die Vorgehensweise hinsichtlich der nachweislich missbräuchlich verwendeten Gelder erläutert. Die Kommission spricht von „schwerwiegenden Mängeln bei der Verwaltung und Kontrolle des EFRE-Programms in Sizilien" sowie einer Unterbrechung der „Zwischenzahlungen zugunsten des Programms bis zur Behebung dieser Mängel".

1. Verfügt die Kommission über aktuelle Informationen, inwieweit diese „Mängel" mittlerweile behoben sind?

2. Lässt sich bereits absehen, wann die Zahlungen wieder aufgenommen werden und wenn ja, in welcher Höhe?

Die „Unregelmäßigkeiten" betrafen zur Zeit der Antwort der Kommission 165 177 928 EUR, wovon seinerzeit ca. 75 % „bereits wieder eingezogen wurden".

3. Kann die Kommission darüber Auskunft geben, was mit den zum damaligen Zeitpunkt übrigen rund 25 % dieser Gelder geschehen ist?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2013)

1./2. Die Kommission ist zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass die bei den Verwaltungs- und Kontrollsystemen des Regionalprogramms für Sizilien festgestellten Mängel in der Zwischenzeit angemessen behoben wurden. Dementsprechend hat sie mit Schreiben vom 6. Februar 2013 angekündigt, die Aussetzung der Zahlungen aufzuheben und die Zahlungen wieder aufzunehmen. Im Februar und im Mai 2013 wurden daher ausstehende Zahlungen in Höhe von 437 Mio. EUR in zwei Tranchen geleistet.

3. Was die zu Unrecht gezahlten noch einzuziehenden Beträge betrifft, so beziehen diese sich auf aktuelle Fälle, für die die Beträge spätestens am Ende des derzeitigen Programmplanungszeitraums eingezogen werden. Als allgemeiner Grundsatz gilt, dass die Kommission die Einziehung unrechtmäßig verwendeter EU-Mittel im Einklang mit den einschlägigen Verordnungen gewährleistet. Im Rahmen der geteilten Mittelverwaltung obliegt es in erster Linie dem Mitgliedstaat, Unregelmäßigkeiten zu vermeiden und aufzudecken sowie Finanzkorrekturen vorzunehmen. Der Mitgliedstaat sorgt dafür, dass die betreffenden Beträge berichtigt werden, entweder indem die betroffenen Ausgaben unmittelbar aus dem Programm herausgenommen oder die unrechtmäßig verwendeten Beträge bei einer neuen Ausgabenerklärung abgezogen werden, wenn die Einziehung beim Begünstigten vor Ort abgeschlossen ist. Die Mitgliedstaaten übermitteln der Kommission Jahresberichte mit Angaben zu den herausgenommenen Beträgen, eingezogenen Beträgen und noch ausstehenden Einziehungen. Bei Programmabschluss prüft die Kommission, ob der Mitgliedstaat allen Unregelmäßigkeiten ordnungsgemäß nachgegangen ist. Was die in der Anfrage angesprochenen noch ausstehenden Einziehungen betrifft, so waren die Verfahren zur Einziehung dieser Beträge zum damaligen Zeitpunkt noch im Gange. Spätestens zum Programmabschluss muss der Mitgliedstaat dafür sorgen, dass alle rechtsgrundlos gezahlten Beträge wieder in den EU-Haushalt zurückfließen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003939/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Supplementary question concerning Question E-007467/2012

In its answer to the question concerning the threat of bankruptcy in Sicily, the Commission explained the procedure in relation to the proven irregular spending of funds. The Commission refers to 'serious deficiencies in the management and control of the Sicilian ERDF regional programme' and to an interruption of 'interim payments to the programme until these deficiencies were addressed'.

1. Does the Commission have up-to-date information about the extent to which these 'deficiencies' have been addressed?

2. Is it possible to tell when payments will be resumed and, if so, what the amount of these payments will be?

At the time of the answer from the Commission, the 'irregularities' related to EUR 165 177 928, of which approximately 75% 'had been already recovered'.

3. Can the Commission indicate what has happened with the around 25% of these funds still outstanding at the time?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

1, 2. The Commission considers that the deficiencies identified in the management and control systems of the regional programme for Sicily have now been adequately addressed. As a result, by letter of 6 February 2013, the Commission decided to lift the payment interruption and resume payments. EUR 437 million of outstanding payments was therefore paid in two instalments in February and May 2013.

3. As regards the irregular amounts still to be recovered, they are related to recent cases, whose amounts will be recovered at the latest at the end of the current programming period. The general principle is that the Commission ensures the recovery of any irregularly spent EU funds in accordance with the provisions of relevant regulations. Within the shared management framework, it is the Member State which has the obligation to prevent and detect irregularities and to make financial corrections in the first place. The Member State ensures that the concerned amounts are corrected, either by immediate withdrawal of the affected expenditure from the programme or by offsetting the irregular amounts against a new expenditure claim, once the recovery from the beneficiary on the ground has been completed. The Commission receives annual reports from the Member States on these withdrawals, recoveries and on the situation of pending recoveries. At programme closure, the Commission verifies that all irregularities have been duly addressed by the Member State. As regards the pending recoveries referred to in the question, recovery procedures for these amounts were still ongoing in the Member State at the time. At programme closure, at the latest, the Member State must ensure that any amount undue is returned to the EU budget.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003940/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9. April 2013)

Betrifft: Staatsschuld Japans und allfällige Auswirkungen auf die EU

Japans Staatschuld ist auf mittlerweile mehr als 234 % des BIP angestiegen.

2010 lag sie bei mehr als 218 % — damit waren die Schulden doppelt so hoch wie die Wirtschaftsleistung des Landes. Bis 2014 soll die Staatsschuld mehr als 246 % des BIP betragen.

1. Davon ausgehend, dass die Kommission diese Zahlen kennt, wie beurteilt sie diese Zahlen und Situation für die Wirtschaft der EU?

2. Welche Auswirkungen könnte ein allfälliger Zusammenbruch Japans auf die EU beziehungsweise den Euroraum konkret haben?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

Japans Bruttoschuldenquote wird für das Jahr 2012 mit 237,9 % beziffert, während die Nettoverschuldung sich auf 134,3 % des BIP beläuft (Weltwirtschaftsprognose des IWF vom April 2013). Da in Japan rund 91 % der öffentlichen Schuldtitel von Inländern gehalten werden, ist die Gefahr einer Staatsschuldenkrise jedoch relativ gering. Die Kommission verfolgt die binnenwirtschaftlichen Entwicklungen in Japan mit großer Aufmerksamkeit, insbesondere im Rahmen der bilateralen informellen Gespräche über makroökonomische Fragen. Die Kommission wird Japan in diesen Gesprächen weiterhin dazu ermutigen, die Konsolidierung seines Haushalts in angemessenem Tempo voranzubringen. Die Kommission sieht dem mittelfristigen Haushaltsplan, den Japan voraussichtlich zwischen Juni und August dieses Jahres vorlegen wird, deshalb mit großem Interesse entgegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003940/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(9 April 2013)

Subject: Public debt in Japan and its possible impact on the EU

Japan's public debt has now risen to over 234% of GDP.

In 2010 it was over 218%, in other words more than twice as high as the country's economic output. By 2014, public debt will have climbed to over 246% of GDP.

1. Assuming that the Commission is aware of these statistics, how does it assess these figures and the situation in relation to the EU economy?

2. What would be the specific impact on the EU and the euro area of a possible collapse in Japan?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Japan's gross debt to GDP ratio is estimated at 237.9% in 2012, whereas its net debt to GDP ratio stands at 134.3% (IMF's WEO, April 2013). The potential for a sovereign debt crisis is however limited by the rate of domestic ownership of Japan's sovereign debt, which stands at about 91%. The Commission is following closely internal economic developments in Japan, notably in our bilateral informal dialogues on macroeconomic issues. In these dialogues the Commission continues to encourage Japan to take measures for fiscal consolidation at the appropriate pace. For this reason the Commission looks forward to Japan's medium-term fiscal plan expected between June and August this year.

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